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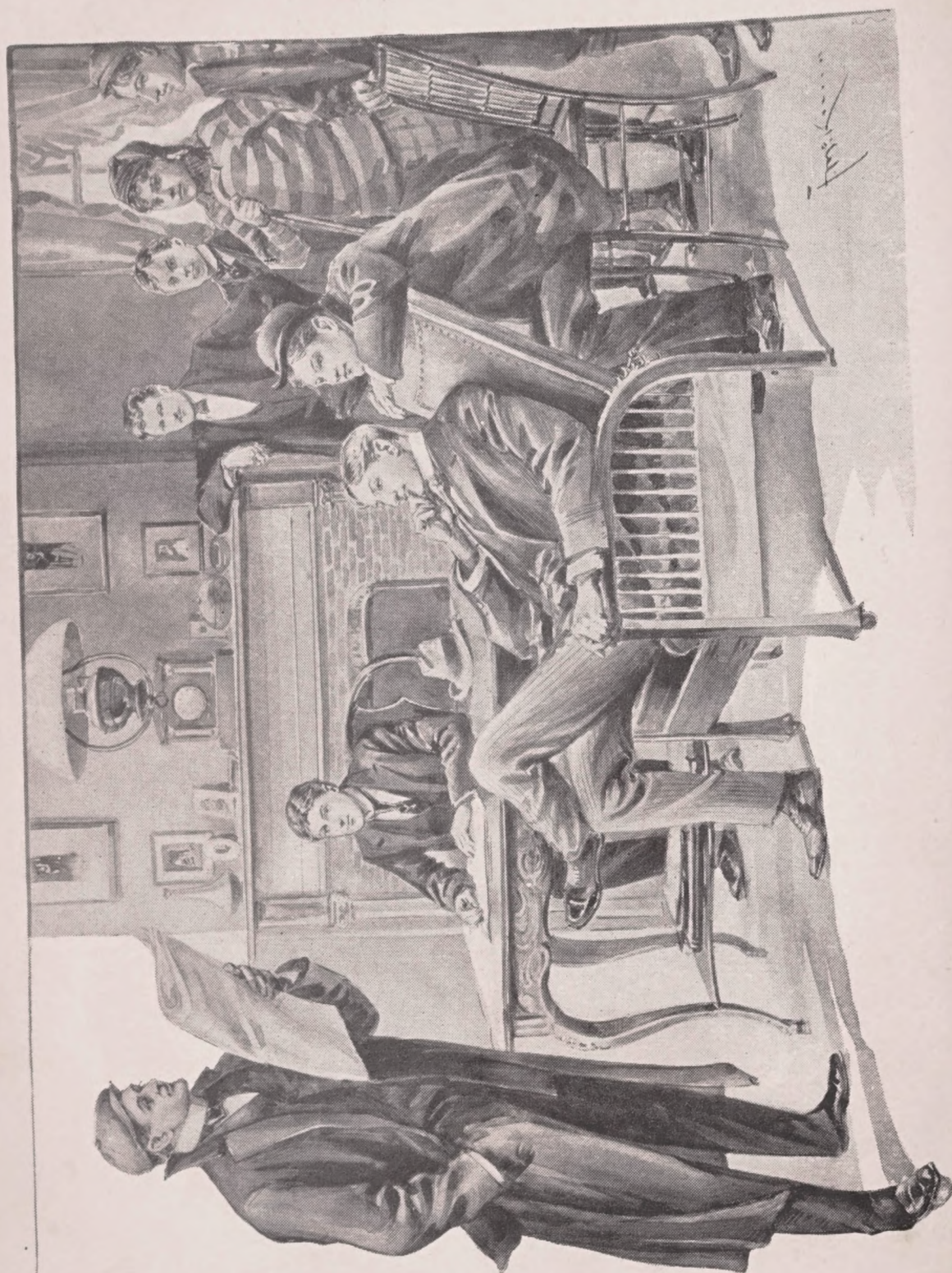
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WARD HILL AT COLLEGE



“He read the sensational report.”

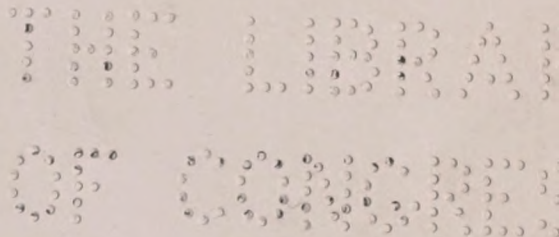
WARD HILL AT COLLEGE

BY

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON

AUTHOR OF

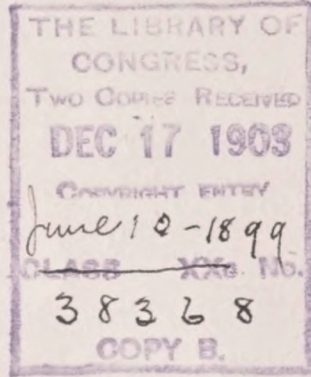
*“Ward Hill at Weston,” “Ward Hill the Senior,” “The Boys of
Old Monmouth,” “The Boys with Old Hickory,”
“Washington’s Young Aids,” etc.*



PHILADELPHIA

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PREFACE

IN this story I have endeavored to draw a reasonably correct picture of the experiences of two lads in college life, especially in the freshman year.

It is a period which has its own peculiar joys and sorrows, and they never are entirely lacking in interest, not only for the younger readers, but also for those who have older grown, and who with a half-smile at times turn back and recall the experiences of that trying period in their own lives.

I have touched upon the mistakes and plights, the joys and sorrows, the rivalries and contests, the sentimental and religious experiences, all of which go to make up the complete story of early life in a small college. But no one of them, nor all of them combined, can ever supplant the drill and discipline of lessons learned in the classroom. The best they can do is to supplement that.

So I trust it will be borne in mind that, in the recital of these events, the unchanging emphasis has been placed upon that thorough work for which the college was established and without which no college course, however enjoyable, can ever be termed successful.

To learn how to learn, to become acquainted not only with those who may prove to be congenial friends, but with one's own powers, one's own self, is the aim and end of it all. This thought has been the undercurrent and the leading purpose in the writer's mind.

EVERETT T. TOMLINSON.

ELIZABETH, N. J

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WARD HILL AT COLLEGE

CHAPTER I

THE OPENING TERM

ALL day long there had been an unusual stir in the quaint little city of Wrinsbuc. The tradesmen as they stood in the doorways of their places of business had a smile of satisfaction upon their faces, and the expressmen and hackdrivers were no less complacent than the merchants. Attractive announcements were displayed in the shop windows, designed to arrest the attention of the passers-by. These cards informed them that within there was to be seen the best assortment of chairs, tables, lamps, and other articles which college students might need, and which were to be had at lower prices there than in any other place in town.

Occasionally some well-grown lad, accompanied by his father or mother, stopped before some one of the insistent signs, and after a brief moment of hesitation entered and remained for a half-hour or more within the store. The visit of the delivery wagon soon after showed that the merchant had not advertised his wares in vain, and the smiles of satisfaction to be seen upon the faces of both merchant and customer showed that there was a common cause of rejoicing in their hearts.

It made little difference where the wagons were loaded, for the destination of all was apparently the same. They all soon afterward appeared upon the campus of Tegrus College, and the various articles were carried up the stairs of some one of the dormitories and deposited in the room

of some student. For Tegrus College was located in the little city of Wrinsbuc, and the September days, which marked the beginning of the college year, were red-letter days to the tradesmen of the town.

Nor were they the only ones who rejoiced in the return of the college boys. Staid people would stop and gaze with a look of sympathy and of interest, which the passing years could not entirely destroy, upon some band of boys who went laughing or singing along the streets, rejoicing in the reunions and the return of old friends. The enthusiasm of young life and the contagion of youthful spirits were so manifest that even the quiet old people of the town, who long since had settled into the good old ways of their fathers, were for the moment roused from their apparent torpor and felt almost young again themselves at the influx of the college students.

For more than a century Tegrus College had crowned the low hill which looked out over the little city. It never had been a large college, for the attendance had never risen above two hundred and fifty, but there was an intensity in its life and a pride in its history which more than atoned for what in the eyes of some it might lack in numbers. Some of the buildings were venerable in their appearance and evidently were beginning to display the certain effects of old age, but no one had been willing to see them replaced, and they still stood to lend the influence of their long experience to the coming generations.

Scattered here and there about the campus were new and decidedly modern buildings, which served to show that while Tegrus might still cling to the old, she was not unmindful of the demands of the present. Among the more modern buildings were two of the largest of the dormitories. In front of them were the great maples, which had stood there no man knew for how many years. Below these branches could be seen the streets of the city, which in the course of the century had managed somehow to creep close

up to the borders of the college, and was separated from them by the railroad, which with its shrieking whistles and thundering trains would have caused a great commotion among the founders of old Tegrus, if by any chance they could have been permitted to hear the strange sounds.

Here and there, as the leaves occasionally were stirred by the breeze, there were revealed glimpses of the winding river, which apparently bordered a part of the city, and at the time of which we speak, flashed under the sunlight as if its little ripples were of silver.

Across the paths of the campus and around the corners of the buildings the returning college boys could be seen, and their shouts and calls, and the occasional songs that arose on the September air, all served to increase the impressions of the place upon the boys who had come up to old Tegrus for the first time and were now to begin their college days; for with the assembling of the students on the following morning, the fall term of the college would begin.

It was now the evening before that day. Lights from the many-windowed buildings revealed the fact that the most of the students had already arrived. The sound of the hammer in many of the rooms showed that the boys were busily arranging their belongings and preparing for the coming opening. Still some belated expressman would come with his burden, and the shouts and calls of the boys in the long halls lent variety to the monotonous sounds from the rooms which the freshmen were fitting up.

On the second floor, in the corner of the newest dormitory, two of the members of the incoming class had been busily working all through that day. Apparently satisfied that their labors were ended now, one of them turned to his companion and said: "I say, Ward, there's nothing the matter with this, is there?"

"I should say not," replied Ward Hill enthusiastically.

"It's about the best room in college. We've got a good view of the river from one window, and on this side we can look out over the town. I don't see how you ever managed to get it."

"I didn't get it ; it was my father who fixed it up."

John Hobart, or "Jack," as his friends called him, and as we have known him, did not feel called upon to explain that the room was an extra priced one and that his father had quietly made the provision by which the boys might have it, for the freshman year at least.

He was aware of his room-mate's feeling of independence and his unwillingness to receive a favor which he could not repay.

Perhaps he honored his friend none the less for the feeling, but it was decidedly troublesome at times, for Jack Hobart, who never knew the meaning of the lack of money, could not quite understand why Ward Hill, whose financial condition was a trying one, should not be willing to permit him the pleasure of relieving it.

For two years the boys had been fellow-students in the preparatory school at Weston, and such a strong feeling of friendship had sprung up between them that nothing would do for Jack Hobart but that he must abandon his plan of entering the famous college in the city where his home was and come with his friend to old Tegrus. For four years now he fondly hoped he and his friend would be together.

So insistent had the lad been that his parents had at last reluctantly yielded their consent, and now, after the long summer vacation had passed, they were together again, and were prepared to enter upon their college life.

"It's a great thing that Pond is coming up here too," said Ward. "He's going to room with Little Smith this year. Next year he'll room with his brother, for he expects to be ready for college then. We'll have a pretty good representation of Weston boys."

"You'll have to do the representing, Ward," laughed Jack. "I'm afraid they'll take me for a pretty poor specimen of Weston's work. I'm sorry for good old Dr. Gray and Mr. Crane."

"I'm not afraid."

"Oh, I'll probably pass in 'chapel,' and may manage to get along all right in football, but when it comes to Greek and Latin——" Jack stopped and made a wry face, as if his feelings were more than he could express.

"I wonder how many we're to have in our class."

"There you are." And Jack laughed. "Here you want to come up to old Tegrus because it's a small college, and there's closer contact with the professors, and a fellow's not lost sight of in numbers, and all that sort of thing; and yet the very first thing you're worrying about the size of the freshman class. Ah, Ward, you're just like all the rest of them. They talk about the advantages of small classes and then work tooth and nail to get every fellow to come there they can hear of."

"I hope you aren't sorry you came to Tegrus," said Ward.

"Not a bit of it. You're here, and that would draw me if there wasn't another fellow in the class. I was only laughing at you to think that after all you were very much like all the others. Every college will take every student it can get, whether it's a big college or a little one."

"But a fellow has got to know something to get into Tegrus."

"Right you are, as I've learned to my sorrow this summer while I've been working off my conditions. I'm sorry, Ward, but you'll have to do the work for two. Hark! what's that?"

From beneath their windows there came a call, which sounded very much as if a number of boys had joined in it. "Hey, fresh! Ho, fresh! Put out your lights, freshmen! Put out your lights, freshmen!"

For a moment the two boys looked at each other, and

then Jack laughed and said: "They've begun early. Oh, well, we're ready for 'em. Let them come."

"Let's barricade the door," said Ward sturdily. "We won't let them into our room."

"Oh, yes we will," said Jack indifferently, as if the coming of a body of sophmores was an every-day occurrence. "One of the advantages of old Tegrus is that hazing 'is a thing of the past.' It's been stored away in the museum along with the fossils and mummies, and other relics of barbarism."

"There isn't much of it here, or at least that's what I was told."

"Oh, well, there isn't much, I suppose; but we'll have to make the best of the little there is. I fancy a fellow doesn't catch it unless he deserves it a bit. If they come up here the only thing we can do is to put on a good face and take things good-naturedly."

"I don't intend to let them run over me," said Ward.

"Hold on, Ward; they won't run over you unless you give them good cause to. We've learned enough about boys in our preparatory course to know it won't do to talk about 'defending our rights till death,' and all that sort of thing. I don't believe they'll touch us; but if they do come up here, let's let them in and pretend we're getting as much fun out of it as they are."

"That doesn't look much as if they'd give up," said Ward, as another call came up from below. "Hey, fresh, put out your lights! Put out your lights, freshmen," was repeatedly called out.

The summons sounded as if ten or twelve had joined in it. Ward was somewhat excited, but his room-mate was, to all appearances, unruffled. No attention, however, was given the demand, for there was doubt as to whom it applied. Doubtless there were other freshmen in the building, and it was not wise, the boys thought, to take to themselves all the attention manifested by prowling sophomores.

"There they come! They're coming here!" said Ward a moment later, in an excited whisper, as the sound of a crowd coming up the stairway could be distinctly heard.

A few moments later the approaching band halted directly before their door, and rapping upon it with their canes, called out: "Open up, freshmen! open up! What are you keeping us standing out here for? Open up! open up!"

To Ward's surprise, Jack stepped quickly to the door, and flinging it open, said: "Come in, fellows. Glad to see you."

In a moment the room was filled with boys, the door was bolted by one of the new-comers, and then they turned and faced Ward and Jack.

"You're freshmen too, I see," said Jack glibly, addressing one of his callers who was standing in the front row tightly grasping a cane in both his hands. "I might have known it; but I hadn't looked up my classmates yet. Anybody might have known we belong in the same boat."

A howl of delight greeted his words, while the cheeks of the one he had addressed flushed with anger. "You're the freshest freshman yet," he said angrily.

"The truth is," said another, "we haven't the honor to belong to the entering class, but we are deeply interested in it, deeply interested, I can assure you. We came around here to-night, though, looking up new material for the glee club. Would you kindly oblige us by taking your stand upon the table and singing for us a little song? It will aid us greatly in our search."

"Certainly," replied Jack, without hesitating a moment.

The ability to sing had apparently been left entirely out of Jack Hobart's make-up, and he frequently declared that he could not distinguish one note from another. It was not a time for explanations, however, and boldly taking his stand on the table, and turning to face the crowd of boys in the room, upon whom he beamed with his most benignant of smiles, he began:

"My Bonnie lies over the ocean."

CHAPTER II

IN THE CHAPEL

GOOD for you, freshman! Good for you! You'll make the glee club. No such voice as that has been heard in years at old Tegrus!" shouted Jack's audience.

"I'm glad you like it," said he soberly. "It isn't often I can find an assembly that appreciates my musical talents. Since you seem to enjoy it, I'll give you another," and again Jack began to sing:

"My Bonnie lies over the ocean."

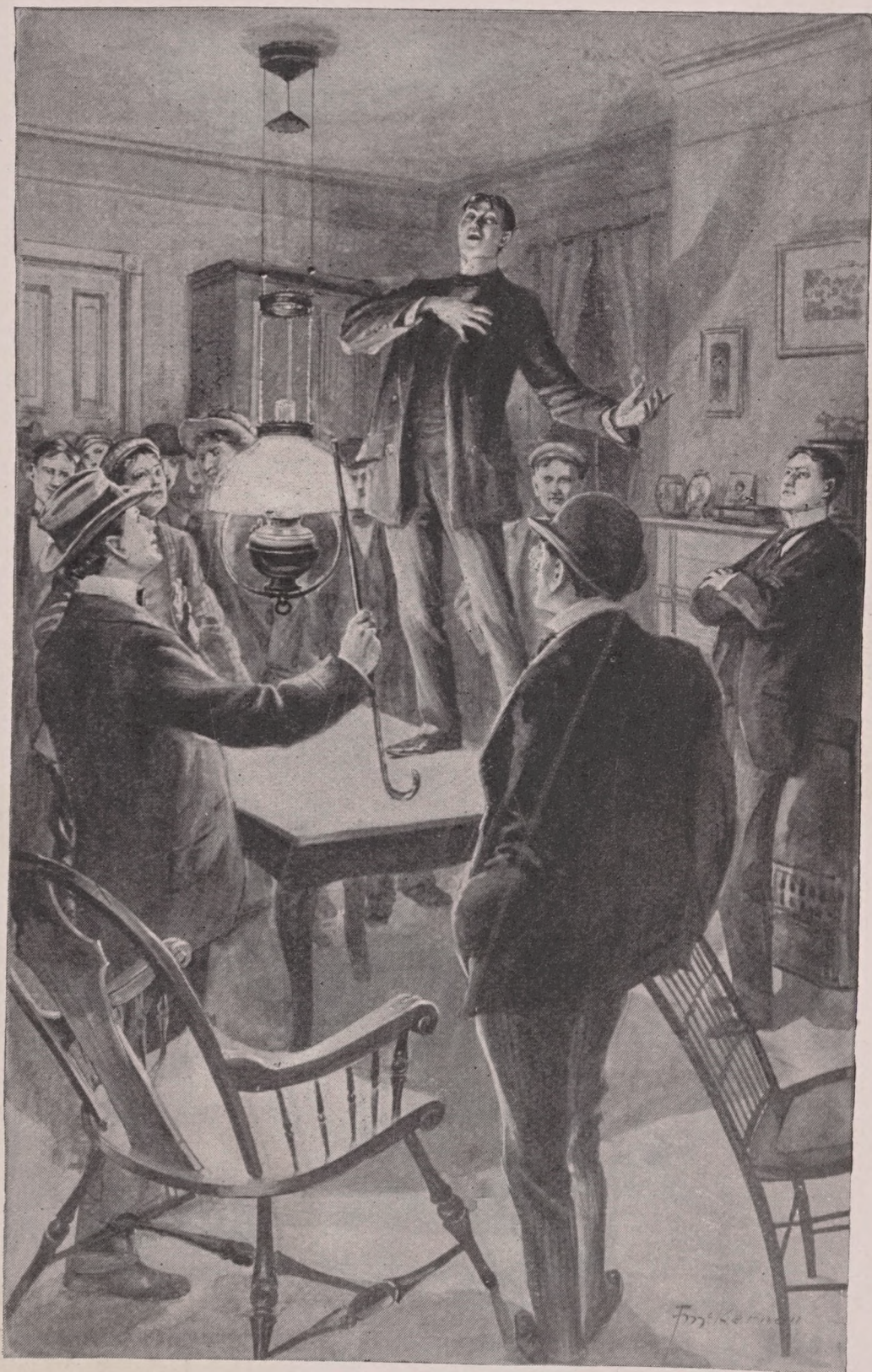
The boys all apparently entered into the spirit of the occasion, and Jack's monotonous groaning drew them all into the chorus, though no two of them were singing in the same key. They were unable to finish the song, however, and burst into shrieks of laughter. Jack did not join, and standing as he still was upon a table and surveying his audience with a sober and unmoved countenance, his gravity seemed to increase the hilarity of all present.

"That beats 'The Lost Chord' of the glee club all to pieces," shouted one. "You're a 'fine' freshman. You'll make the glee club, never you fear."

"Hold on, boys," said Jack, "I'm going to sing again," and once more he began with his heavy, monotonous voice:

"My Bonnie lies over the ocean."

"Hold on! Hold on, freshman! Enough's enough. We know you're all right. You'll make the glee club, and we'll not trouble you any more. But we're after candidates for the crew too. We hear your chum comes from near the seashore and doubtless he is as good an oarsman as you are a singer."



“‘I’m going to sing again.’”

As he spoke the leader of the band turned to Ward, who felt his cheeks flush with anger. He had little of the adaptability of Jack, and the whole scene seemed to him childish and silly. However, he tried to remember Jack's warning, and as he perceived how readily his room-mate had turned what threatened to be a disturbance into good-natured banter, he resolved to do nothing to provoke trouble. He stood quietly facing his visitors, but made no reply to their implied question.

"Yes, he comes from the seashore and he's a capital oarsman. You want to look out though; he's got biceps like cast iron," said Jack.

His words were not without effect upon the company, as Ward could readily perceive, but his hope that the annoyance was ended proved to be vain.

"All the better for the crew, then," said one of the boys. "Now then, freshman, we'll pretend these are oars, and you take them and show us your stroke." He took two wooden toothpicks from his pocket and handed them to Ward.

"What am I to do with these?" inquired Ward with a blank look on his face.

"Why, take them and show us how you pull. We'll get an idea of your stroke, you see. Sit right down here in this chair and go through the motions."

For a moment Ward's eyes flashed, and he almost decided to decline, no matter what the result of his refusal might be; but just then observing an appealing expression on Jack's face he thought better of his purpose, and quietly taking the extemporized oars he seated himself in the chair and began to go through the motions of rowing.

The whole thing seemed to him so absolutely senseless that perhaps his feeling of disgust betrayed itself upon his countenance. At all events there seemed to be so little sport in watching him that the visitors speedily declared themselves satisfied with his prowess as an oarsman, and after a few forced attempts at laughter bade him desist.

"Now, freshman," said the leader, turning again to Jack, "what's your name?"

"Hobart," replied Jack promptly, "and my chum's name is Hill. Now, what's your name?"

"You'll find that out soon enough," laughed the speaker. "You'll do, you two fellows, and I'm glad you've come to old Tegrus. We need just such material."

"No doubt of that," said Jack soberly. "That's the reason we came, because we wanted to do good to some of our benighted fellow-men," and with a droll gesture he included all in the room. "I'm only sorry about one thing."

"What's that?"

"That you fellows don't really belong to our class. I took you for freshmen, every one of you, when I saw you come into the room. It's a great disappointment to me, I can assure you. Why, I never had a doubt that that fellow there was a natural born freshman. He has all the symptoms, anyway," and as he spoke Jack pointed at the one he had singled out when his visitors had first entered the room.

The fellow was a flashily dressed youth, somewhat heavier and larger than the most of his companions, and as Jack spoke he looked up with the evident intention of making some reply. But the words were not spoken; his cane dropped upon the floor, and a sickly smile crept over his face as his classmates all began to laugh boisterously at Jack's speech.

"You've caught it now, Livey," laughed the leader; then turning to Jack he said: "You did well, freshman. That fellow likes the freshman class better than any other man in the college. After he entered he was so delighted with that year that when he came back to college the next fall he took it right over again. Then the faculty took a hand, and at the close of the second year they wrote his father that Livingston's work had been so frequently

brought before them and had attracted so much attention, that for the sake of the college they begged that he might be permitted to take it again. His father proudly consented, but this year Livey could not be persuaded to remain there longer. But we must go on, fellows. We'll never find enough men for the glee club at this rate."

As the boys turned noisily to leave the room, the leader shook hands cordially with both Jack and Ward, and said: "My name's Russell, and I room right over you here in Hall." (The dormitory was named "Hall," after the donor.) "Come up and see me. You'll have no trouble in college, let me tell you. Good-night."

"Good-night," replied Jack.

As the departing visitors passed through the hall they began to sing:

"My father sent me to old Tegrus,
Resolved that I should be a man;
And so I settled down
In that noisy college town
On—the—banks—of——"

The words of the song died away and Ward and Jack turned back into their room.

"Of all the pieces of silly foolishness that ever I saw, that beats them all," began Ward. "I didn't believe college fellows could be so simple."

"That's all right," replied Jack good-naturedly. "It was foolish, and it isn't worth while to make too much of it just on that account."

Ward smiled at the implied rebuke of his friend, and said: "What a fellow you are, Jack! I don't believe I could be angry at you if I tried."

"Don't try."

"I sha'n't, but you know how to take everything in the best way. I'm sure if I'd been here alone I'd fear trouble to-night; but you sent all of these fellows away feeling as if you were about the best friend they had. I wish I knew how to get along with the fellows as well as you do."

"Oh, well, you know a lot more about studying than I do, so we'll call the accounts square. You look after the lessons and I'll look after the fellows. How does that strike you?"

Ward laughed, for his good nature was now restored and the visit of the sophomores had lost the most of its importance in his eyes. It was now late in the evening. The sounds of trunks dragged through the halls and of the confusion in the various rooms had mostly ceased. No longer were the songs heard from the campus, and many of the lights in the dormitories had disappeared.

Ward and Jack were neither sorry when the light in their study room also disappeared and each of them sought his bedroom. The day had been an exciting one, and the morrow was to witness the beginning of their real life in old Tegrus.

On the following morning they made their way up the avenue which adjoined the college grounds to the house of Mrs. Platt, where they were to take their meals, at least for the fall term. Ward felt a little abashed when he was ushered into the dining room and introduced to the boys who already had assembled about the two tables there. Jack was more self-possessed, and it was not long before Ward too was feeling more at his ease, so cordial were the students. Doubtless, he thought, his fears of the sophomores were greatly exaggerated, for the boys were laughing and telling the stories of the reports of the preceding evening as if they were something new in college life.

"Here comes Russell. He can tell us all about the raids," said one, as the student referred to entered the room and seated himself directly opposite to Ward.

"I haven't anything to tell," replied Russell, "except that the freshman class has got some of the best material in it that ever entered old Tegrus. Of course some of it will have to be put into proper condition," he added slyly, smiling as he spoke.

"I thought they said hazing was dead at Tegrus," said Ward.

"Hazing? So it is," replied Russell. "That's pure barbarism, at least according to the faculty's view; but, you see, occasionally there's a fellow who needs some little personal attention and he gets it. Never more than he deserves though."

"Did you have any in your freshman year?" inquired Jack with a sober face.

"I had some, but perhaps not so much as you think I ought to have had," replied Russell, joining in the laugh which arose from all in the room at Jack's question.

Both Ward and Jack felt that they should like Russell, who joined them on their way from Mrs. Platt's, and explained to them many of the customs of the college.

The chapel bell was soon ringing, and with fast beating hearts the boys turned toward the building, realizing that now they would see their classmates, and could form an estimate of their companions.

"Hey, fresh! Ho, fresh!" could occasionally be heard from various parts of the campus, but little attention was given the hail, and soon Ward and Jack entered and took seats in the section assigned to their class.

What a beautiful and impressive room it was. From the walls the portraits of some of the former and famous members of the faculty were hanging, and their benignant faces made Ward feel as if he was surrounded by a cloud of unseen witnesses, for he rightly thought that the pictures were all of men who were dead. Through the soft colored glass of the windows the light of the September sun was pouring, and as it fell upon a portrait here and there it served to leave the impression of a cloud of glory. In the straight and heavy carved chairs at the sides of the stand were the seats for the professors, and as they came slowly in one by one the eager lad found himself conjecturing who this one was, and who that. Behind the desk sat the

venerable president of the college, his head leaning upon his hand, and looking out over the gathering assembly with an interest and pride he was at no pains to conceal. Up the aisles in groups of two or three came the college students, the sophomores making a little unnecessary noise with their canes and looking curiously across the room to the side where the freshmen were seated, and who were only too conscious of the attention they were attracting.

Between the two rival classes were the seats of the juniors and seniors, so placed by the faculty as a barrier, though at times they were rather an incentive to trouble.

The short, sharp taps of the college bell suddenly ceased, a few belated students slipped into their seats, the organ ceased its low music, the venerable president rose, and a solemn hush fell over the assembly.

Ward gave but little heed to any of the services that morning, except to the president's prayer. It seemed to the eager lad as he saw that saintly face turned upward, as if the man were very close to the Almighty. In simple language, such as a little child might have used, and yet with such an air of confidence and trust did the old president offer his petition that Ward felt as if he were listening to one to whom the eternal things were very real and true.

As he prayed for the entering class, Ward wondered how he could understand their feelings so well, and when he referred to their homes and the empty places at the family table and the lonely feeling in the heart of the father and the mother, who had suffered indeed that their boys might be trained for life and become men, the lad's eyes were blurred with tears.

Before his mind there arose the vision of the little white house with its green blinds in the far-away village he called his home. He could see his father even then, and the thought of his care and love made his heart soft and warm. And his mother! Ah, yes; the good old president's prayer should not be in vain, for him at least.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST WORK

WARD HILL'S devout meditations were suddenly interrupted as he realized that the president's tone had changed, and in a somewhat hurried manner, far different from that which he had used, with a few abrupt words he was bringing his petition to its close. The last words had not been uttered when the chapel seemed to be a scene of confusion. As if by magic the boys sprang up from their seats and began to move down the center aisle.

If Ward had not been startled by the unexpected movement he would have seen that only the juniors and seniors were going out from the chapel, for the under classmen were supposed to wait with all due respect for the upper classmen to precede them; but he was taken unaware by the abrupt movement of the students near him, and as his own seat was at the end of the row, he too quickly rose and began to move down the side aisle, all in ignorance in his confusion that he was the only one of his class to leave the freshmen seats.

As he drew near the door he perceived his mistake, but it was too late to rectify it then, so taking his stand just outside the chapel he waited, though his cheeks were flushed in his mortification. His feelings were not relieved when he saw that he was the center of observation of the students, who now came pouring out of the room, the sophomores and freshmen having risen after the other two classes had departed.

"Hey, look at the freshman! Wait for your betters, freshman! Going to take a seat with the president next

time? We'll all wait for you to-morrow morning!" were among the cries with which he was saluted.

Feeling almost as if he had committed an unpardonable sin against the established customs of the college, he was too much mortified to show any anger.

He was relieved when Jack came along and thrusting his arm under that of his friend drew him away, saying: "Never mind, Ward. It's all right. We'll go over and report with our class at Professor Dunbar's room. That was where the president told us to go."

Rejoiced to escape from his present predicament Ward eagerly turned and walked with Jack along the path which led to the building in which Professor Dunbar met his classes. On every side of him were the noisy students, and shouts and calls, class cries and the college cheer were mingled with the songs into which some of the irrepressible boys were frequently breaking. Apparently his mistake was forgotten, and the attention of all was taken up with other matters.

The feeling of chagrin had not left Ward's heart, however, but he could not be entirely unmindful of the stirring scenes about him. Hilarious as the boys were, they were all steadily moving toward the recitation buildings, and when Ward and Jack climbed the stairs the most of the disturbance had ceased, and no one was with them except those who, it was evident from their appearance, were like themselves new students in old Tegrus.

When the boys entered the room many of their classmates were already there, and Professor Dunbar was seated behind his desk, glancing occasionally over his spectacles, as he looked up from the lists he was examining at the incoming students.

Somehow a wave of longing, almost of homesickness, swept over Ward as he looked at the man who was to be his teacher of Latin. How different he was from Mr. Crane, his teacher in the preparatory school, and how

changed was everything from the quiet and orderly ways at Weston. Would he ever feel at home amid these strange surroundings? And his classmates—would he ever have for them the feeling he had cherished for that marvelous band which only last June had completed the course at Weston and gone forth together from its halls?

At the thought he glanced quickly about at the class. Some of them appeared almost old enough to be his father, he thought. Others were only lads. Some evidently were from the city, and others showed that they were not familiar with the ways of city people. Altogether there must have been about sixty-five of them. They impressed Ward at first, as the first glimpse of strange faces is apt to do, with a feeling that they were not over attractive, although he could readily discover many whom he knew to be "good fellows."

Professor Dunbar had now risen from his seat, and stood facing the class. There was a pleasing expression upon his face, but his bearing was somewhat effeminate, and Ward could not repress the feeling that the boys would be prone to take advantage of his weakness, or indecision, or gentleness, whatever it was, a feeling which we shall learn in the course of this story was well founded.

"Please be seated, young gentlemen. Take any seat this morning. After to-day we shall assign you seats, which you will be expected to occupy at each recitation, but for the present any chair will do. Take any one."

There was a little tremor in his voice that again impressed Ward unfavorably, but he only glanced at Jack, and then both of them seated themselves in the nearest unoccupied chairs.

As soon as the boys became quiet the professor resumed his talk. He explained the few college rules, told them where and when they were to report for their recitations, named the books, and assigned lessons for the following day.

"There will be two divisions of this class," he continued. "For the present the divisions will be arranged alphabetically, and then at the close of the first term a new division will be made, based upon your scholarship. I trust you will all be able to enter the first division then. Until that time all the young gentlemen whose names begin with a letter of the alphabet preceding M will be considered as in the first division, and all others in the second. Now when I shall have called the roll you may consider yourselves as dismissed for the day."

"May I be permitted to ask of you one favor?" he continued. "When I call the name, will the young gentleman rise and respond? And too, if his father is the bearer of any title I should be pleased to have you so state it, that we may be able to give proper respect in our correspondence where it is due."

Beginning with "Adams" and "Andrews" the professor called the roll, each boy responding to his name, and in case his father was the bearer of a title, also giving that, which was received with a smile by the professor, and compared with the list on the desk.

When "Hobart" was called Jack rose, his face serious and showing that its owner was seemingly impressed by all the dignity of the occasion.

"And has your father a title?" inquired the professor.

"Yes, sir."

"Ah! I am pleased to be informed of it, for evidently there has been an omission on the list I have here. And what is your father's title?"

"People in the city generally call him 'mister,'" replied Jack quietly.

A suppressed titter ran around the room, none of the class feeling as yet quite bold enough to laugh aloud.

"Ah, yes. I might have known. Hereafter we will consider that title as belonging to every man, and will make no mention of it in specific instances."

The roll-call proceeded, and when it was finished the boys at once departed from the room. A band of sophomores stood by the entrance to the building, but contented themselves by making various remarks upon the appearance of the incoming class. A few of the new students ventured to reply, but the most of them passed quietly on.

"Come over here," said Jack. "Let's see what's going on at the bulletin board."

Ward followed and joined the boys who were reading the notices which had been posted, and glanced at the motley collection of invitations, notices, and generous offers to dispose of second-hand books and furniture "at prices unheard-of before, even in the long and glorious history of old Tegrus."

"We'll go up and see the football team practise this afternoon," said Jack. "I see they have extended a special invitation to the freshmen to turn out."

"When's the studying coming in?"

"Oh, any time. You can study when you can't play football, can't you?"

"I suppose so; though, honestly, Jack, I don't feel as if I ought to begin by playing football when I should be studying. You know I had a good taste of all that up at Weston."

"All right, Ward," said Jack quickly. "You are right, and we'll go over to our room and dig out some of our lessons now."

The boys at once turned and entered their room in "Hall" and began their work, as fortunately they had already secured their books. But Jack was too much excited by the new life to continue his efforts long, and soon went quietly out of the room and Ward did not see him again before they met at their boarding house.

In the afternoon, after another ineffectual attempt to study, Jack said: "It's no use, Ward. I just can't settle down until I've seen the team practise. If they're any

good, I think I can come back and go to work with a good grace."

"All right, Jack," said Ward with a laugh. "You go on and I'll come up after a time. You know I don't dare cut into my work yet."

"I don't want you to," said Jack impulsively. "You're to pull me through in Greek, you know, and I'm to look after the football end."

It was two hours later when Ward at last laid down his books, and taking his hat started swiftly toward the athletic field from which he could hear the shouts of the assembled students. What it had cost him to delay he only knew, but there was a sturdy determination in his heart to "place first things first," as he expressed it, and the greater freedom of college life over that of the preparatory school had already shown him the increased resolution which would be necessary to make him hold steadily to his work.

"Hello, freshman? Going down to see the team practise?"

Ward looked up at the salute and saw Russell, the leader of the sophomores on the occasion of their visit in the preceding evening, approaching.

"Yes, I thought I would," he replied as he waited for the sophomore to approach.

"That's right. There's nothing like showing the true spirit when you first enter college. We're going to have a good team this fall."

"That so?" inquired Ward, as he looked more closely at his companion.

He was a fair-haired fellow with a pleasing face, almost too pleasing Ward thought, as he noticed the continued smile playing upon it. Still he was cordial and friendly, and his open-hearted manner was decidedly attractive to the stranger lad.

"Yes, I thought last year of trying to make the team myself, but I gave it up."

"Why?"

"Oh, it's too much of a grind. It's practise, practise, practise. Then you have to go to the training table, and that's too much for a fellow of my delicate constitution. Besides, I've changed my course this year and that makes a little extra work, or at least difficult work."

"What did you change your course for?"

"I got tired of the other one. Say, freshman, I want to give you a piece of advice," he added in a lower tone.

"Say on."

"Don't commit yourself to any of the societies; that is, unless you have done so already," and he glanced shrewdly at Ward as he spoke.

"Do you mean the Greek letter societies?"

"Yes, what else could I mean? Now I happen to know that several of them want to talk to you, but the Pi——"

"Hold on a minute. What's the meaning of that?" interrupted Ward hastily.

Looking across the campus he had discovered Jack being led or helped along by a companion on each side of him. Running swiftly toward him, a closer inspection did not tend to decrease his surprise.

Jack was limping painfully, as if one knee had been severely injured. His clothing was torn, his face was streaked with blood, and altogether he presented a most woebegone and forlorn appearance. But what increased Ward's astonishment was the expression of supreme delight with which his room-mate beamed upon him as he saw him approaching.

CHAPTER IV

THE CLASS MEETING

"IT'S great, Ward. It beats anything we ever had at Weston," said Jack enthusiastically, as he observed his friend approaching.

"What's great? I don't think I understand," said Ward dubiously, unable to restrain his expression of sympathy at the dilapidated appearance of Jack.

"Oh, the football, I mean. It's just immense! These fellows here are seniors, Ward. This is Mr. Oliver and this is Mr. Drake," he added, introducing his companions.

"Your friend's a plucky fellow," said Oliver, after he had shaken Ward's hand cordially. "He says he never has played football before, but he had the nerve to go in on the scrub team against the 'Varsity. He'll show up well as soon as he has learned the game and had a little practice. He runs like a deer, and I believe he'd jump straight at a stone wall if he was lined up against it."

"But I don't understand," persisted Ward, again gazing ruefully at Jack. "He looks a good deal more as if he'd been run over by a locomotive than playing football. What's happened?"

"Nothing's happened," and Drake laughed, "except that your chum's been in a bit of a scrimmage, and not being dressed for the game he's come out of it a little the worse for wear. He'll be all right to-morrow or next day. Hot water and a bottle of liniment will fix him out as good as new. He's wrenched his knee a little, and we were just helping him along."

The two seniors returned with Jack and Ward to their room, and after attending to the wants of the injured fresh-

man sat and talked with them for an hour, explaining the college customs, bestowing fatherly and doubtless wholesome advice, and all the time, as Ward thought, shrewdly observing both him and his room-mate, though for what purpose he was unable to decide. That they had a purpose became evident in a few days.

"Who was that you were with, freshman?" said Oliver to Ward as he rose to depart.

"When I was coming across the campus? That was Russell, a sophomore."

"I thought so. The boys call him 'Anceps.' Perhaps his name is all I need to mention."

"Why, isn't he all right?" inquired Ward in surprise. "He seems to be a very pleasant fellow."

"So he is; but his name is 'Anceps' just the same. A word to the wise is sufficient. Good-bye, freshmen. We'll look you up again."

"What does 'anceps' mean, Ward?" said Jack after the visitors had departed.

"It's a Latin word, and I think means 'double-headed' or 'doubtful.'"

"What do they call him that for, do you fancy? Is he two-faced?"

"I don't know," replied Ward, nevertheless thinking of the various changes in his plans which Russell had already referred to in their conversation.

Jack's accident was not a severe one and did not prevent him from at once beginning to study, a duty in which Ward assisted him, and as he already had the work of the morrow well in hand, Jack felt, when it was time for them to go over to Mrs. Platt's, that he could make a creditable showing in case he should be called upon to recite.

To his room-mate's offer to bring his dinner over to him, Jack gave a quick refusal, declaring that he was not an "invalid," and although he limped somewhat painfully as a result of his experience on the football field, to all appear-

ances he was as cheery and light-hearted as ever. He received many words of warm praise at the table from the boys who had watched the game of the afternoon, and Ward could see that whatever Jack's work in the classroom might be, his friend was destined to be very popular among the college boys.

And in his heart Ward rejoiced. Who could help liking the warm-hearted, generous, impulsive Jack? His own love for him had grown through an acquaintance of two years, and if he had been his own brother he did not believe his feelings could have been warmer than they then were.

On the following morning Ward made no mistake when he departed from the chapel, we may be certain, and on his way to Professor Dunbar's room Russell, or "Anceps," overtook him and said:

"I say, Hill, I can help you in Sammy's work if you'd like me to."

"Sammy? Who's Sammy?"

"Why, Professor Dunbar. Don't you know? I thought that everybody who came up to Tegrus knew who Sammy was. His full name is Samuel Johnson Dunbar, but for a good many generations, I don't know just how many, he's been known as Sammy. I think every class for twenty years has played horse with him."

"Played horse? I don't think I understand."

"Oh, you'll learn the Tegrus language pretty soon, my child," said Russell with a laugh. "It just means they're not so quiet in his room as they are in Petie's, or some of the others. Our class led a goat into the room with us one day and tried to teach him Latin. Sammy was enthusiastic and danced around like a tight-rope walker, but it didn't do any good. The goat didn't seem to appreciate Samuel Johnson's efforts in his behalf."

As Ward made no reply, the effusive sophomore continued, "I can help you out in his work, though, as I told

you. I can give you every one of his fine points, for I've got a Livy all marked up with them. It was given me by one of our fraternity fellows. The Pi——"

"Thank you," said Ward abruptly, "but I'll have to leave you now."

He was already behind the most of his division and was the last to enter the room and take his seat. In spite of the novelty, he made a good recitation when he was called upon and even Jack did well. But the professor's uncertain manner and his too evident desire to please the class led Ward to think that Russell's words about "Sammy" might have too much truth in them.

In the Greek room, over which Professor Reeves presided, Peter Jonathan Reeves his name stood in the college catalogue, there was an entirely different atmosphere. Every student attended carefully to the recitation and there was not the slightest tendency to disorder of any kind.

Ward was sadly puzzled to account for the difference. The same boys recited to the two men, but to one they gave their undivided attention, while in the classroom of the other there was a constant tendency toward disorder. Ward Hill was not the only one who has been perplexed by the same problem. The world apparently consists of "Sammys" and "Peties," to use the expressive slang of the college boys. To one class the utmost respect is shown and to the others respect seems to be wanting. Perhaps the solution is to be found in what men are rather than in what they do, and that to be respected it is first necessary that one have in him the basis of respect. The first qualification for success in life does not lie in what we can acquire, but in what we can be. Like "the man behind the gun" which has made the success of the American navy proverbial, lies the man behind his profession. "What you are speaks so loudly I can't hear what you say," is one of the aphorisms of one of America's profoundest men. And although Ward Hill had already met the same fact in his experience in the

preparatory school, never before had he been so much impressed by it as he was after the close of the first day of recitations in old Tegrus.

The work now began to take on its regular and systematic form and our boys began now to feel more at home and to enter into the spirit of the life about them. On Friday afternoon there was a freshman class meeting for the selection of officers. As most of the boys were strangers to one another, there was of course little chance for "college politics."

There had been rumors of attempts to be made by the sophomores to break up the assembly, and Jack was eagerly hoping that some of them would make their appearance. As he started with Ward for "Sammy's" room, the place designated for the meeting, the sight of groups here and there upon the campus of the members of the class above them gave some promise of the conflict which Jack desired ; but apparently no notice was taken of the freshmen.

"We're not going to have any trouble, you see," said Jack regretfully. "They are not going to bother us, for they haven't even spirit enough to yell 'Ho, fresh !' at us as we pass by."

"I hope there won't be any, for my part," replied Ward ; "I haven't very much sympathy with college rows."

"Hear my friend of long experience talk," said Jack laughingly. "If I didn't know you so well, Ward, I should say you had lost the bloom of your youth. But seriously, old fellow, I'm glad of every word you say, and I know I need it. I want to do good work, but I don't want to be just a 'dig,' you know. There's something besides books to be studied in old Tegrus."

"Football and sophomores, I suppose."

"Yes, football and sophs, if you please. They're a poor lot, though, these sophs. I don't want to be prejudiced and I don't think I am ; but when you look over their class and compare it with ours, why it doesn't seem as if they ought to be in the same college with us."

Ward laughed aloud, for Jack was speaking seriously and his sober face revealed to his friend that he was very much in earnest.

"O Jack, I didn't think you'd catch it so soon, but you're just like every fellow I've ever heard talk. You think your class is the only one of any account the college ever had. Why, my own father was talking to me just before I left home, and you know how he feels toward me and how proud he is of me too, though I'm afraid his pride will have a fall; and even he said, and he was just as sober as a judge when he said it, that he didn't suppose I'd have to face the competition and rivalry here that he did when he was in college, for his class contained more bright men than his alma mater had ever sent out in one year before or since."

"You can talk, Ward, and it's all right, but I'll give you just ten days and we'll see if you can't give me points on class spirit. You were enthusiastic enough about our class at Weston."

"But that really was a great class," protested Ward in all seriousness. "It isn't often you find such a class in a 'prep' school. Why there were Pond and Henry and——"

"O Ward! O Ward!" and Jack laughingly slapped his room-mate upon the shoulder. "Isn't that the very thing I've just been talking about? Here you are even smiling at your good old father's pride in his college class, and what are you doing but talking in the very same way about your own."

"I suppose I am," and Ward Hill's merry laugh rang out as he spoke. "I suppose I am, though I hadn't thought of it before in that way. Still, Jack, you'll have to admit that that class at Weston was a great one."

"Admit it? Of course I admit it, and glory in the fact too. It is seldom equaled and never excelled unless it is by the present freshman class in old Tegrus. But here we are. The room seems to be pretty well filled up already."

The boys entered and took their seats, looking about with

curiosity at their classmates, who appeared to reciprocate the feeling heartily, while no one seemed to know just what to do.

At last when all the class had assembled, one of the oldest members rose and called the meeting to order. He explained that he had taken upon himself the duty at the insistence of some of the others, and after briefly stating the purpose of the meeting called for the appointment of a temporary secretary.

"Richards!" shouted some one, and Richards was accordingly chosen; and as he advanced to the desk, the curiosity with which the assembly regarded him, clearly indicated that few had known, when they voted, who Richards was.

The temporary chairman, whose name was Merrill, was selected as president of the class, the chief reason for his selection apparently being that his name was known, and those of the others were not.

When the nominations for secretary were called for, Ward Hill suddenly stood up and nominated his room-mate for the office. Hobart was selected by acclamation, again the class appearing to rejoice in the fact that some name had been suggested, and when Jack advanced amidst the cheers of the assembly to take his place at the desk, the curiosity with which he was regarded was as great as that with which Richards had been greeted.

When the president called for nominations for a class treasurer there was a pause as the names which any one knew had apparently been exhausted. Jack waited a moment and then rose and presented the name of Ward Hill.

Ward's face flushed as he rose, and said: "Mr. President, I must decline to permit my name to be presented. My chum and I have not formed a mutual admiration society to advance each other's interests. I prefer not to serve."

His modest speech, however, at once roused the class and

nothing would do but that Ward Hill should be the class treasurer.

“You’ll not get rich ! It won’t take much time ! We’ll not put you under bonds !” were among the calls that greeted him, and Ward withdrew his declination.

The president then rose to suggest that a committee be appointed to select the one who should be the “choragus” or leader of the class singing, the committee on athletics, and a few other matters, and that it should report at a later meeting, when he was suddenly interrupted by some one in the rear of the room, who called : “Mr. President, I think the door has been fastened on the outside.”

In an instant all the parliamentary rules were ignored and the class made a rush for the door. It required but a moment to discover that the words were true and the door could not be opened.

To add to the confusion, derisive calls and cries were heard from the hall, and it was evident that the sophomores had stolen a march upon the unsuspecting freshmen.

CHAPTER V

JACK HOBART'S EXPLOIT

THE freshman class meeting was adjourned without the formality of a vote, and the immediate problem which presented itself was how they were to find an exit from the room. Pull and tug as they might, the door refused to yield, and every effort to open it was greeted by a derisive yell from the sophomores in the hall.

At last, after it was seen that all efforts to escape by the way of the door were worse than useless, Jack Hobart made a rush for one of the windows, and hastily raising it, looked out. The room was on the third floor and at least forty feet from the ground. To escape by that means was impossible.

To make matters worse, his appearance was greeted by a shout from some of the sophomores who were on the ground below, evidently waiting for some of the imprisoned class to appear. "Jump, freshman! We'll catch you! Come on! Leave the greenies up there! Hurrah for the freshies!"

Jack drew back into the room again, his disappearance from the window being greeted by another shout from below. The class had desisted now from their efforts to open the door and a long consultation followed. Various schemes were suggested, but as none appeared practical, they were all rejected. The calls and jeers from without had not ceased, however, and the prospect of release was as far distant as ever.

"Hold on a minute, fellows," suddenly called Jack, as again he ran to the window and peered out.

Although he remained there but a minute, his appear-

ance was evidently a source of delight to the rival class, and once more he was saluted with a chorus of calls and jeers and various invitations for him to leave the disgraceful company he was in and come down and join the only respectable class in old Tegrus.

Jack, however, had seen all that he had desired to, and as he turned again to his classmates, he said: "I say, fellows, the window under us is open, and if you can let me down to that, I can get out into the hall and open the door from the outside."

His proposal was hailed with delight, but the boys were sobered when Merrill said: "You can't open the door alone. You'd be only one against fifty. Besides, how would we let you down? We haven't any rope."

"Tie a couple of coats together and let me down by them. As for being one against fifty, I don't care for that. It'll make a diversion, anyway, and if the sophs get away from this door here, perhaps you can force your way out. Anyway, let's try it. It will never do to stay penned up here like a lot of sheep."

Some one produced a strong cord, and in a few moments two coats had been sacrificed for the honor of the class, and securely bound together were lowered from the window, and then the reckless, perhaps foolhardy, lad at once prepared to descend.

For a moment there was silence after he made his appearance, even the members of the rival class apparently being impressed by the boldness of the scheme and realizing that the lad was in no slight danger. As his feet struck the ledge, however, and he grasped the partly open window with his hands, they recovered from their surprise, and shouting their calls began to throw such missiles as they could lay their hands upon at the daring freshman.

Jack quickly entered the room safe from all harm from without, and as the cries redoubled, he thought of course he would be met and overpowered at once by the sophomores

who were in the building. But to his surprise no one disputed his presence or progress, and when he went out into the hall, his surprise was still further increased by the fact that no one could be seen there.

Too eager to delay for any investigation, he at once ran quickly up the stairway to the hall above, and as he obtained a glimpse of that, he saw that only Jimmie, the college janitor, was there. Not a sophomore could be seen. The janitor was endeavoring to untie the rope which had been fastened to the door and then tied to one of the posts in the hall.

"Where are the sophomores?" said Jack, as he hastened to assist the janitor in his task.

"I don't know anything about the sophomores," replied Jimmie. "Professor Dunbar told me to open this door, and that's what I'm trying to do."

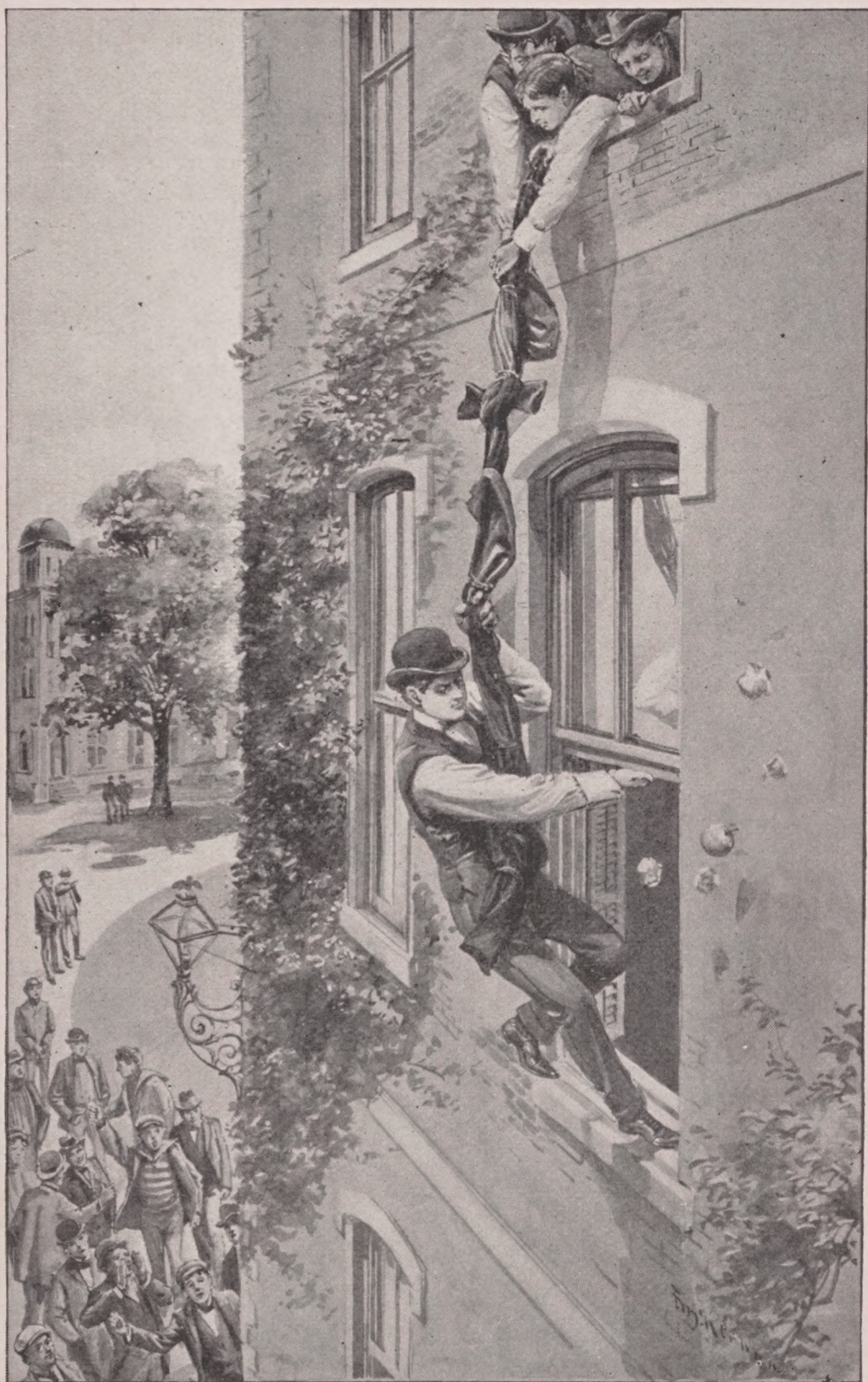
"Where is he?"

"In there," replied the janitor, indicating by a nod of his head the adjoining room.

The mystery of the sudden disappearance of the sophomores was then explained, thought Jack. Doubtless the unexpected arrival of the professor had put the assembled mischief-makers to flight. Whatever the cause might be, the immediate task was the release of his classmates, and soon the rope was untied and the entire class rushed out of the room and ran shouting and calling down the stairs.

For a few moments there was danger of what in college language is known as a "rush" as the boys came running out upon the campus, for the other class had not entirely dispersed; but doubtless the presence of one of the faculty made even the sophomores hesitate, and all that was done was to greet the liberated freshmen with a chorus of derisive groans and jeers.

Ward Hill was greatly excited by the occurrence of the morning, and as he and Jack walked back to their rooms, he gave utterance to his feelings in no very quiet way.



"The lad was in no slight danger."

"Seems to me your class feeling is rising," said Jack with a laugh.

"Perhaps it is," replied Ward. "I know one thing, and that is, that I won't put up with the nonsense of these sophomores. They're a lot of hoodlums!"

"Right you are, Ward. It is our duty to teach them some of the proper respect which is due to the best class that ever entered old Tegrus. Hello, we've got visitors," he added, as he discovered the door of their room open and the two seniors, Oliver and Drake, comfortably seated within and awaiting their return.

"Good-afternoon, freshmen," said Oliver, rising and shaking each by the hand. "You don't make it a rule to leave the door of your room unlocked, do you?"

"No. Did you find it unlocked?"

"Yes. Take my advice and don't let it happen again. Been having a class meeting?"

"Yes."

"I thought so by the noise the sophs were making. Did they break you up?"

"Yes—no; that is, they did in part, though not till after Ward and I had succeeded in electing each other to a good, fat office. Ward's treasurer of the class and I'm secretary."

"You've done well, freshman," and the senior laughed.

"Jack got out of the room and slipped up into the hall, but when he got there the sophs were gone. They'd tied the door you see," said Ward. "But when Jack got up there they were all gone, and Jimmie—I think that's what you call the janitor, isn't it?—was there alone trying to untie the rope."

"Yes; and Jimmie didn't appear even to know the sophs had been anywhere around," said Jack, with a significant laugh.

"Oh, Jimmie doesn't know anything any more," replied Drake, with a laugh. "He used to go around, and he saw

everything that was going on, and I think he sometimes took a microscope along with him too. But that's all past now. Jimmie never sees anything any more. He discreetly carries his face on the top of his head, and looks straight at the sky."

"What's made the change in him?" inquired Ward.

"That's hard to tell," replied Drake. "I have a suspicion that he's been studying some things not mapped out in the curriculum, and that some of the boys have taken upon themselves the duty of teaching him. At all events he's been an apt pupil. A man, even Jimmie, can learn something besides the studies in the catalogue. It's something like the names the college bestows upon the fellows, and the faculty too, for that matter."

"What do you mean?" said Jack.

"Oh nothing but that there's usually a renaming of the boys and the professors too by the students. Perhaps it's what Prexie would call a 'retroversion in type,' or 'a return to first principles.' You know the old Hebrews, and all the old fellows, for the matter of that, used to give a man a name, as the Indians did, which should be true to himself. We sometimes are introduced to a man his neighbors call 'Brown,' but it doesn't mean he's brown at all. Well, college boys go straight for the first principles, and whenever they give a man a name it means something. The name doesn't always come out in the catalogue, though sometimes it's a good deal better than the one that is printed there after all. So, freshmen, if you get a nickname pretty soon, and you don't like it, don't blame the fellows for it, but blame yourselves, for ten to one they've hit you squarely and fairly, and the thing to do is to change yourself, and the name will drop as the leaves fall from the trees in October, or words to that effect."

"Did you have a nickname, Mr. Drake?" inquired Jack soberly.

Oliver laughed aloud, and Drake's face crimsoned.

"Good for you, freshman," said Oliver. "You've hit the bull's eye the first shot. Yes, my friend here was called 'Trot' in his early career in old Tegrus, but as he remarked in his poetic figure, it's 'fallen from him as the leaves do fall after an October frost.'"

"'Trot?' What's that? What did they give you that name for?" asked Jack of Drake.

"For the same reason that they bestowed the title of 'Dig' upon my friend Oliver here. I fear both names belong to our early years, though Oliver perhaps still deserves his. You'll learn more about these things later on. What we came for just now was to ask you if you had any engagement for next Monday evening?"

"No; I haven't," said Jack quickly. "You haven't either, have you, Ward?"

"Nothing except my regular work," replied Ward quietly.

"Very well," said Oliver, "we'll call around for you then about nine o'clock next Monday evening. We'll go down to 'Mammy's' first and have some cream, and then we'll have you up to our rooms."

When the seniors departed the two boys, highly flattered as they were by the attention of the members of the graduating class, were at a loss to understand why it was they should receive so much attention at their hands. Satisfied, however, to leave the problem unsolved until Monday evening should arrive, they thought but little more of it, and gave themselves to their work.

The newness of the life was now rapidly disappearing. Both Ward and Jack were beginning to respond to the demands upon them, and there was every prospect that college life would have more than its customary pleasures for them.

On Saturday afternoon there were no recitations, and both repaired to the football field. Jack determined to play again, although his knee was not yet entirely recovered, and Ward was an interested spectator. This time,

however, Jack wore a canvas jacket and the regulation uniform, and escaped without any mishaps. Indeed, Oliver, who was the captain of the 'Varsity team, took special pains to commend him for his work, gave him directions and suggestions, and to Ward it seemed that he was critically observing his room-mate's playing, and was more than pleased with what he saw.

At half-past nine o'clock on Sunday morning there was a Bible class conducted by one of the professors. Attendance upon this was voluntary, but both Ward and Jack were there. At half-past ten there was a preaching service in the college chapel, and as the president spoke that morning to the boys, Ward was deeply impressed by the sermon. Indeed, the novelty was still so strong that every new duty brought its fresh pleasure.

As the boys walked to their room after the service, accompanied by two of their former classmates at Weston, Smith and Pond (the former still rejoicing in the distinctive title of "Little" Smith), many were the eager expressions of delight with the new life expressed by all four of them.

Little Smith, it is true, declared that he had been disappointed in the president's sermon that morning, because, as he expressed it, "he could understand every word of it." He was hardly aware of the high compliment he paid it by these words.

On Sunday evening there was the college prayer meeting, and both our boys felt, when they returned from it, that they had, as Jack declared, "put in a full day." However, it had been a "good" day also, although Ward was at the time somewhat puzzled to account for the preponderance of freshmen at all the voluntary services.

On Monday evening, promptly at nine o'clock, both Oliver and Drake appeared at their room in Hall, and as Ward had been studying out of the usual time to prepare his lessons in advance, he was as rejoiced as Jack at the coming of the two seniors.

In response to their suggestion, Ward and Jack at once took their hats and prepared to follow their callers, their hearts beating rapidly in their excitement as they realized that the purpose of the much discussed visit was now to be made plain.

CHAPTER VI

TWO ATTENTIVE SENIORS

MAMMY'S was one of the familiar institutions of Wrinsbuc. For more than a generation of college boys it had been a rallying place of the students, and fathers were accustomed when they brought their sons up to old Tegrus to make with them at least one visit to "Mammy's," and commend to her especial attention the lads they were to leave behind them.

Mistress Myers, which was Mammy's orthodox and more dignified name, her fat and round little face beaming with imperturbable good nature, never failed to give her promise, and to her credit, be it said, seldom failed to keep it. For she had a special interest in the college boys, and her plain words—that is, plain in their intent and meaning, although they were decidedly tinged with a rich Dutch brogue—were often listened to by some of the students when it is to be feared that the words of wiser if not of better men and women were frequently ignored.

Mammy's ice cream was said to be the best in the world. Mammy herself declared it was, and her opinion was born of personal experience, and therefore not lightly to be ignored. And the Tegrus boys were not disposed to question her verdict. If the frequency with which they visited her parlors and the rapidity with which her wares disappeared were to be considered as a standard of judgment, then certainly there was a measure of truth in her statement. It was to Mammy's that the belated students were accustomed to go when by chance they overslept and knew that the doors of their boarding houses were closed against them. Here frequently class suppers were laid, and as the quality

of her banquets was not one whit behind that of her ice cream, her popularity was considered as fixed, and the mere mention that an affair of that character was to occur at Mammy's was always a sufficient guarantee that it would be a success. The tables and floors were always neat and clean, her linen spotless, and the rooms attractive. Indeed, upon the walls the colors of old Tegrus were woven into almost countless forms and fashions, and no student was more devoted to the welfare of the venerable institution than was Mammy Myers herself.

Of Mr. Myers no one ever thought of speaking. He could be seen whenever the boys visited the place, busied in executing the orders of his excellent spouse; but among the students he was only regarded as a somewhat necessary adjunct to the establishment, and under no circumstances to be considered as its head. Perhaps Mistress Myers had a somewhat similar opinion herself, for she ruled her good husband apparently with little effort, and certainly with as few compunctions as she lorded it over the noisy college boys. And it was Mammy's supreme control which, after all, was not the least of the elements which made her place attractive to the students. Whenever the laughter of an assembly rose to an undue pitch, or the songs became too boisterous, Mammy's round little form appeared in the doorway and her keen little eyes would snap as she said in her broken English, "Vat for you do dat?"

The noisiest of the students became quiet at the rebuke, and seldom was it necessary for her to repeat it. As a consequence of her excellent viands and the strict rule with which she governed her place, Mammy's popularity waxed strong with students and faculty alike. And the title of "Mammy" which had been bestowed upon her was far from being one of disrespect. It was rather in the line of the appreciation of her excellent qualities, for there was not one of the Tegrus students who was not fond of the jovial little lady who regarded their appetites and the

honor of the college as both being in a large measure entrusted to her special care and keeping.

In view of all these facts, it was but natural that soon after the two grave and dignified seniors, Oliver and Drake, had entered the room occupied by Ward and Jack that they should suggest that all four should repair to Mammy's.

Nothing loath, the two freshmen eagerly accepted the suggestion, and a few minutes later were seated with their companions at a little table in a corner of one of the more retired of Mammy's rooms and were sampling her condiments in a manner highly conducive to the comfort of that excellent woman's heart.

Both Ward and Jack were highly flattered by the attention of the two seniors. Oliver was the captain of the 'Varsity football team and very popular in the college, and Drake was acknowledged to be among the first men in his standing in scholarship, so that it was only natural that the two freshmen should feel somewhat elated by the marked favor with which two of the most prominent students in old Tegrus regarded them.

The conversation had turned on various phases of college life; the prospects in football, the quality of the entering class, the outlook in athletics, and several other subjects were duly considered. All of the time, however, Ward had the feeling that the main purpose for which the two seniors had sought them out had not yet been touched upon. His curiosity was not specially troublesome, for Mammy's ice cream and the entertaining stories of his companions made him feel that to possess his soul in patience was not a very difficult task under the existing circumstances.

"I fancy you have already begun to get a fairly clear idea of what college life is," said Oliver at last. "It doesn't take some men as long to do that as it does others."

There was something in the tone of Oliver's voice and the peculiar emphasis he placed upon the word "men," that led Ward to believe that now he was about to learn the

true meaning of the attention he and his room-mate were receiving. He resolved, however, to remain silent unless he was directly appealed to and leave Jack to do the talking, a task from which, to all appearances, the latter was not in the least inclined to draw back.

"Oh yes," replied Jack lightly. "It isn't so different from the life at Weston, you see. That's one advantage Ward and I have over some of the fellows, for we've learned a little of what it means, before we came up here, to be thrown upon ourselves."

"Precisely," replied Oliver. "Both of you show that ; but what I had in mind more particularly was whether you had become acquainted with many of the fellows yet."

"We know some of our classmates," said Jack, "and of course we've met some of the fellows in the other classes, just as we've met you."

Ward thought that Oliver was not entirely pleased with Jack's reply ; but his manner was no less cordial as he said : "If you don't mind telling me I should like to know who some of them are. I may be able to give you a point or two, and that's worth something to a freshman."

Jack mentioned the names of some of the students who had shown themselves especially friendly, and Ward thought again that he could see that Oliver was slightly annoyed by the reply. However, he turned again to Jack and said :

"Well, freshmen, what I really want to know is whether you have pledged yourselves to any of the societies or not?"

"You mean the Greek letter societies?"

"Yes."

"Well," said Jack, winking slyly at Ward, as the true purpose of the seniors became apparent, "not exactly. Of course we've seen the houses, and some of the fellows have been talking to us."

"Who's been talking?"

"Oh, I don't think I'll refer to their names ; but Russell,

the sophomore, 'Anceps,' I think you said he was called, gave us a good piece of advice, or at least it seemed to us good, didn't it, Ward?"

Thus appealed to, Ward nodded his head, but made no other reply. He saw what Jack had in mind, and he was enjoying the interview thoroughly.

"What was his advice?" inquired Oliver after a brief silence.

"He told us not to be in a hurry about pledging ourselves to any one."

"He gave you good advice for once in his life. Old Tegrus is a little peculiar in its life in some respects. Almost all our students are members of some of the societies, and it is a great mistake for a freshman, before he's learned all he ought to know, to pledge himself to any one of them. He might get in with a crowd he'd be sorry he'd joined, you see, and then it would be everlastingly too late."

"Which do you think is the best?" inquired Jack soberly.

"Go slow, Oliver," said Drake with a laugh, "the freshman isn't an innocent."

"Why, there's no doubt," said Oliver quickly, "that the Delta Beta is the best. There are more prominent men who are members of that than of any other. It has far and away the best set of fellows in college. It has the most beautiful house, it has taken more prizes, and holds more honors than any other fraternity in Tegrus."

"Is that so?" said Jack in apparent surprise. "Why, that's the very same thing that Russell said about the Pi Eta and that Dixon said about the Psi Theta. Didn't Russell say that the president belonged to his fraternity?" he added turning to Ward and speaking with a gravity that was almost more than his room-mate could endure.

"I believe he did say something of the kind," replied Ward.

"Pshaw! That's all talk! What you want to do,

freshman, is to find out the facts in the case. The best societies don't have to run around and hawk their wares like a crier in the streets."

Just then Ward felt some one touch his foot under the table, and as he glanced up he at once perceived that Drake had touched him by mistake for Oliver. All unaware of the warning of his classmate, Oliver was about to proceed with his speech, when Drake quickly rose from the table and said:

"We've had a good time, freshmen. We're grateful to you for coming down to Mammy's with us. It's a pleasure to meet the new fellows, you know, and now I suppose we ought to be going back. You may have some work to do."

As the four departed from the place, Jack managed to whisper in Ward's ear: "Isn't it great fun, old fellow? We'll play these societies against one another and we'll have treats till Christmas. This isn't the last time we'll be invited down to Mammy's, you can rest your soul on that."

On the way back there was no further opportunity for conversation between the two freshmen, for Oliver took Jack and Ward walked along by the side of Drake. And Ward was strongly attracted to his companion. He was a quiet, somewhat reserved fellow, but his evident manliness and kindly manner drew the new student to him very strongly.

When at last they halted for a moment at the gate of the campus, Oliver said: "Now, freshmen, I hope you'll think over what I've said. Don't be in a hurry about pledging yourselves to join any one of the fraternities. The good will keep, and you don't want to join the poor at any time."

"We'll not forget what you've said," replied Jack, giving Ward a gentle nudge with his elbow as he spoke. "It's very kind of you, I'm sure."

"Not at all. Have you been inside any of the society houses?"

"No; I didn't know they ever let an outsider in."

"Oh, well, they do sometimes as a special favor. I say, Drake, we might take them over to our rooms a little while now. You know Drake and I have our rooms in the Delta Beta house. Some of the upper classmen, and a few of the under classmen too, for the matter of that, have their rooms in the fraternity houses. It's more like home, you see. Come over and we'll show you what it's like."

"Thank you," said Jack. "It's too late to come to-night."

"That's so, perhaps it is. Well, come over to-morrow night. I want you to meet some of the fellows you haven't seen yet. How will to-morrow night suit you?"

"How will that do, Ward?" inquired Jack of his room-mate.

"I think we'd better put it off till the next night."

"All right. We'll come then, Mr. Oliver, if that will suit you just as well," said Jack.

"Just as well," replied the senior, although Ward thought he was nevertheless a little disappointed at the delay. "We'll come around for you then."

"All right; thank you. Good-night."

"Good-night," replied their visitors as they turned and walked up the street.

"I tell you, Ward," said Jack, slapping his room-mate on the back and dancing about in his glee, when they had re-entered their quarters, "we're in great luck. There's no doubt about it, the Delts are the best society in college, and I heard to-day they were going to make a dead set for us. But it won't do to give in, you see. We'll just have to keep it going, and if any other society wants us to join, why we'll listen to 'em. Of course we'll listen."

"But you can't join but one," protested Ward.

"And I don't want to join but one, but if some of the

others feel called upon to take us down to Mammy's and treat us as Oliver and Drake have, why it would be sheer cruelty to deprive them of the pleasure, and for one, I haven't the heart to do it. No, sir! I can't be so cruel as that." And Jack stopped and calmly surveyed himself in the mirror.

"Oh, Jack! What a fellow you are! You put on an expression as innocent as a baby's and ask a question that makes even a senior crawl. He can't make out whether you're driving straight at him, or are one of the most unsuspecting freshmen that ever entered old Tegrus."

"And I don't intend that he shall. It's the only protection a poor, verdant freshman has. But I shall be mighty glad when Wednesday night comes."

"So shall I," replied Ward eagerly. "I'd really like to know what there is in this society business. I can't make it out."

Promptly at the appointed time on Wednesday evening the two seniors, Oliver and Drake, appeared at the room in Hall and with them the two freshmen soon after departed for the Delta Beta house, assured that their curiosity would now soon be gratified.

CHAPTER VII

THE COMING OF THE CRINTOP ELEVEN

WHEN the boys entered the Delta Beta chapter house they found there an assembly of the members who, by the hearty welcome they gave, speedily assured both Ward and Jack that they were in the presence of friends. The house itself was a very attractive one, and as Ward surveyed its rich furnishings and saw the manner in which evidently the boys lived, his heart sank within him, for it was only too apparent to him, he thought, that the limits of his purse would not permit him to join. However, he had not yet been invited to join, he reflected, and seeing how happy Jack was, he resolutely endeavored to put aside all disagreeable thoughts and enter into the spirit of the occasion.

The evening proved to be a most enjoyable one. Oliver and Drake evidently were leaders, and under their special guardianship our boys were soon made acquainted with all the students present, and were the recipients of very marked attention. For an hour or more they were all seated in the parlor, and the songs and stories were enjoyed by all. Ward noticed that many of the stories were concerning the college deeds and days of some of the eminent men who had graduated from old Tegrus, and that somehow all these same eminent men had been members of the Delta Beta fraternity, and the quick-witted lad was not at a loss to account for the motive of the story-teller; but he made no mention of his discovery, and was one of the most attentive listeners.

After refreshments had been served, Oliver said: "Perhaps Hill and Hobart would like to have a look at our

house, to get an idea of how the fellows live who are not shut up in the dormitories."

As the two freshmen expressed their desire, the senior conducted them through the rooms, and again Ward was somewhat depressed by their apparent luxury. Jack was outspoken in his expressions of delight, and Ward could readily see that his room-mate was creating a very favorable impression upon all. He did not envy Jack, but his heart was nevertheless somewhat heavy as he concluded that all these things were not for him.

"There's one thing about old Tegrus," said Oliver as they returned to the parlor, "and that is, that probably there isn't a place in the world where a fellow's money counts for as little as it does here."

Had he been reading the thought in Ward's heart? The lad could not determine; but it was nevertheless with a lighter countenance he said: "One wouldn't think so after seeing your beautiful house, Mr. Oliver."

"That's where you make a mistake." And the senior laughed. "The Delta Beta house is pretty well fitted out, that's a fact; but that doesn't mean that the fellows in college have had to pay for it all. You see, we're very fortunate in having a good many of the prominent alumni in our fraternity, and they don't forget us. Indeed, one of the best things about the Delta Beta is that our graduates are so very loyal and keep up their interest. Lots of them come back in commencement week and make our house their home while they're in town. And they help the young fellows too when they're just out of college. Our house is all paid for and furnished by the alumni. It's a fortunate thing for some of us who are not overburdened with this world's goods. Of course," he added, "some of our fellows come from wealthy homes, but not all of them. It's what the man is, not the money he has, that is the first qualification we look for before a fellow is invited to join the Delta Betas."

They had now returned to the parlor, where their entrance was again hailed with delight. The songs were renewed, and under the influence of Oliver's last words, spoken, he somehow felt, for his especial benefit, Ward responded as he had not done before, and was not a little pleased to observe that the favor with which he was regarded was evidently more marked.

"What's that room in there?" inquired Jack, pointing to some heavy dark-colored curtains that were hanging at one end of the parlor apparently to conceal what lay behind them.

There was an awkward silence for a moment after Jack's question, until Oliver said: "That? Oh, that's where we keep our goat. He lives on tin cans and freshmen, so we can't show him to you. His appetite is always pretty keen in the fall term, and as he's a somewhat dainty fellow, we have to be careful."

"I beg your pardon," said Jack quickly, perceiving that he had been treading dangerously near the dark and mysterious ground of the Delta Beta's pet secrets. "I'm only a freshman, you see, and can't be expected to know much. I have to ask questions to learn."

"That's all right, freshman," replied Oliver lightly. "Perhaps——"

Evidently thinking better of what he had had it in his mind to say he suddenly ceased, and Ward and Jack rose to depart.

The experience with the Delta Beta fraternity was only one of a number of similar episodes that soon followed. "Mammy's" became a very familiar place to the two freshmen, and as the kind-hearted little woman came to know them and they became accustomed to her place and ways she would smile when they came into her parlor, seldom twice in the same company, and her little eyes would twinkle as she greeted them.

"It vas goot to be freshmans somedimes," she would say,

and Jack's droll smile and sly wink in reply somehow seemed to afford her great delight.

Rejoiced as the boys were, however, at the attention they received, Jack soon became somewhat troubled.

"I can't understand it, Ward," he said one night. "These fellows have been treating us royally, but it isn't so much fun as I thought it would be."

"Why, what's the trouble now? Is your little body weary of this wicked world? Have you become tired of Mammy and her goodies?"

"No, that isn't it; but haven't you noticed how the Delta Betas have almost dropped us? They're friendly enough, but they never asked us to join, and for the last few days they appear to be leaving us alone."

"I don't know. I hadn't thought very much about it. It appears to me that Oliver seems to be friendly with you."

Ward had noticed the very thing to which Jack referred, and he was as disappointed as his room-mate. He was inclined to attribute the change to his own financial condition. Doubtless the society they now were most eager to join, if they joined any, had put him aside, and Jack was also to be compelled to suffer with him.

As the feeling returned to him at Jack's evident disappointment, he was about to express the thought which had been troubling him and explain that he would step aside and give his friend a free course.

Before he could speak, however, Jack spoke up and said: "Oh yes, Oliver's all right; but then he's the captain of the football team, you see, and since the trainer has come and has been kind enough to pick me out as one of the substitutes for the 'Varsity team and sent me to the training table, he has to take some kind of notice of me, I suppose. But I confess I'm sorry; for there's no doubt the Delts are the finest set of men in old Tegrus."

"No; there's no question about that, I think," said Ward slowly.

"I think I must be like a girl. When the Delts paid us a good deal of attention, I drew back a little, for I felt so sure they were after us and I thought it would be great fun to get several of the fraternities following us up. But when they saw what was going on, I've half a notion they suspected what I had in mind and just dropped the whole thing."

"Oh, well, it's early in the term yet. Not many of the freshmen are wearing society pins, and it may be that you'll have a chance in the game with Crintop next Saturday, and will put up such a game that they'll be compelled to fall on their knees and beg you to come in."

Jack smiled, but made no further reply, not even a dim suspicion of Ward's feeling and purpose entering his mind. But the reference to the game with the team from Crintop seemed to divert his thoughts for the present and the subject was dropped.

Jack Hobart's zeal on the football field, his fleetness as a runner, his sturdy frame, and his courage, which nothing seemed to be able to quench, had brought him into favorable notice by the captain and trainer of the team. He had been so quick a learner and had displayed so much promise as a player, that along with two other freshmen he had been chosen for the football squad, and for ten days had been taking his meals at the "training" table. It was true he was only a substitute player, but if faithfulness in practice and a willingness to follow instructions were any criterion, it would not be long before he would rise into the dignity of a regular player on the college team.

Less than twenty miles from Wrinsbuc was Crintop College. It was a venerable institution, older even than old Tegrus. Its students came from all quarters of the globe, and its graduates were famous in almost every line of work known to men. Within its halls was gathered a crowd of students which in numbers exceeded those of Tegrus almost ten-fold. It had great buildings and many of them, and to

the world at large there was nothing in the name and fame of Tegrus which would for a moment permit of her being placed in the same class of colleges with the wealthy and famous institution at Crintop.

Only in one particular were the devoted friends of Tegrus wont to claim that their college excelled the other, and that was in the work done in the classroom. It was claimed that there the Tegrus boy was compelled to do a work which the lad in the great neighboring institution might more easily avoid. But that may have been only the judgment of prejudiced friends, and like that which a mother or grandmother is wont to pass upon the members of her household, perhaps not the most candid and just.

However that may have been, Crintop, great in wealth and numbers, pursued the even tenor of its way, almost unmindful of its modest neighbor in the little city of Wrinsbuc. Not that it was not aware that Tegrus was located there, but its very existence was a matter concerning which it took but little or no interest. On the other hand, in spite of the many protestations of indifference and boasts of superiority in the work done in the classroom, Crintop was a name frequently heard among the Tegrus students, and evidently mentioned with respect.

Whatever Crintop's weakness in the classroom may have been, there was no weakness on the football field. There her prowess was almost unequaled, and the sturdy lads who upheld the name of their college in their contests with their rivals were seldom put to shame.

Again it was whispered, how justly few knew, and those few were discreetly silent, that some of the giants in her rush lines had been induced to come to Crintop by other and stronger motives than the love of pure learning. Indeed, there was a rumor among the Tegrus boys that one of the Crintop players, a man mighty in brawn if not in brain, had frankly declared his plight when told that his services on the football field would not be required unless

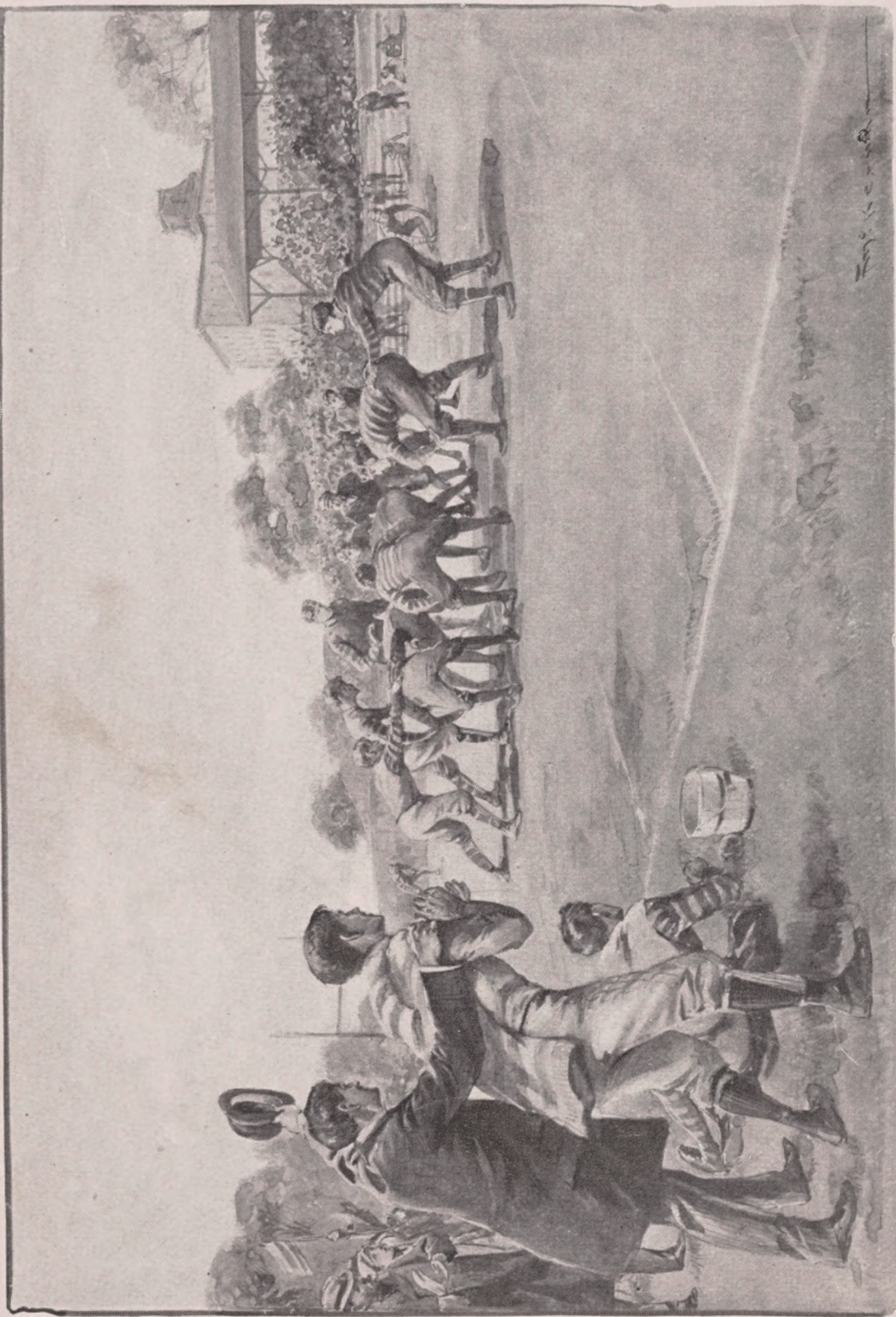
he was actually enrolled as a student and in person attended some recitations. He had scratched his head dubiously when the list of studies with the unpronounceable names had been presented to him for him to indicate those he would select, and finally, after a painful period of suspense, he had declared: "Well, if it's all the same to yez, I think I'll be after takin' figerin' and a little of the spell-in'."

As that was only a Tegrus tradition, and we are not concerned with the exact status of the Crintop students as students, being interested just now in the matter of their prowess in football, we shall have to leave the investigation of its truthfulness to other and wiser heads.

The first football game of the fall was that between the two colleges. Tegrus played, of course, without the slightest expectation of winning, and Crintop with no fear of losing. The only question at issue was the size of the score—the Tegrus boys resolved to do their utmost to keep it low, while the Crintop team were equally resolved to swell it to the highest possible mark.

The day for the game had come and a crowd had assembled on the Tegrus field to witness it. Many of the Crintop students also were there, having come over, not so much for the purpose of watching the contest, for of a "contest" they were well assured there was small likelihood, but to "get a line on the playing of the team," as they expressed it, and thereby be able to form some estimate of the ability to cope with their stronger and more formidable rivals later on in the season.

It was the first college game Ward had ever seen, and his interest was consequently very keen. It was true he was not himself to play, but that mattered little. Jack was there and Ward was standing close to the line watching his room-mate dodge and kick and run about the field in the preliminary practice. Jack was clad in the college uniform, and though as only a substitute freshman he had no



"The teams were lined up."

expectation of entering the game, nevertheless he had been ordered to report, an order which we may be certain he was not slow in obeying.

The assembled crowd reminded Ward of those far-away days at Weston. It was much like those he had seen there, although the present gathering was much larger. Coaches and drags were wrapped around with college colors, the girls were equipped with banners, and from various parts of the assembly college cheers and songs were heard. It was a stirring sight, and Ward Hill was feeling the influence of it as much as any one there.

“There they come! There they come!”

The crowd was shouting and cheering as the stage drove upon the field and the Crintop players leaped out and clad in their striking uniforms at once began to pass and kick the balls about the field.

Soon, however, the teams were lined up, and Ward, standing beside Jack, who had flung his sweater about his shoulders, joined in the cheer that arose as one of the Crintop players passed back the ball and the game was begun.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FOOTBALL GAME

FOR a moment the ball was lost to sight in the scrimmage which followed, and then suddenly one of the Crintop players broke through the lines, and hugging the leather sphere tightly in his arms, started quickly toward the Tegrus goal. The cheer that arose from the sympathizers of the visiting team quickly died away, however, when Oliver made a rush for the holder of the ball and brought him to the ground.

Jack was stepping up and down in his excitement, and leaning eagerly forward as if he was trying to assist the captain of the Tegrus team in his efforts. Ward was almost as excited as his room-mate, though his manner was not quite so demonstrative; but the cheer which rose at the play was perceptibly increased by the aid his sturdy lungs afforded.

Again the teams lined up, and again the Crintop players broke through the Tegrus rush line and bore the ball down the field. The resistance, however, was not slight, and only a few feet were gained.

On the third attempt there was a fumble, and Oliver, who seemed to be the life of his team, and doing the most of the work, quickly fell upon the ball and held it.

"Three cheers for Oliver!" called Jack in his excitement, forgetting for the moment that he himself belonged to the Tegrus team. The cheers were given with a will, and repeated again and again by the crowd which lined that side of the field.

It was now the turn of the Tegrus men to try to advance the ball toward the goal of their rivals; but instead of play-

ing with the dash of their opponents, every move was made with deliberation, and no one appeared to be in any haste.

"What's the trouble? Why don't they rush it?" said Ward excitedly.

"They're fighting for time, freshman!" replied Jack. "Can't you see that every minute the game is prolonged it means just so much less time for those Crintop fellows to score in? There! They're off now!"

The ball had been snapped back as Jack spoke, and passed to Oliver, who made a desperate dash against the opposing ranks.

It was impossible at first to discover what success had crowned his efforts, for both teams were quickly piled in an indiscriminate mass, which to Ward seemed very much like a huge animate body with arms and legs projecting in all directions. The confusion was soon over, and as the referee marked with his cane the place where the runner had called "down," it was seen that he had succeeded in gaining but very little ground.

"It's like throwing yourself against a stone wall," said Jack gloomily. "Who ever saw such a rush line as those Crintop fellows have? You can't do anything with it."

Ward made no reply, for just then the ball was passed to the other half-back, who then tried to circle the end. As he ran swiftly toward the line a shout arose from his supporters, but it was soon hushed when it was discovered that he had not gained any ground when the opposing eleven fell upon him. The third and fourth attempts met with no better success, and by default the ball was then given to the Crintop men.

It was now the turn of the visitors to cheer, and cheer they did lustily as one of the sturdy players broke through the line and came struggling, stumbling down the field dragging three of the Tegrus men upon his back, who were vainly striving to bring him and the coveted ball to the ground.

"They've gained a good ten yards," groaned Jack when

the teams lined up once more. "There they go again," he quickly added in despair.

The Crintop men were playing with a dash that threatened to carry all before them. There was not a delay of a moment. Every man instantly sought his place in the line, the signal was quickly given, and once more the same huge player came plunging through the line, throwing off the most of the Tegrus men who vainly strove to lay hands upon him, and apparently but slightly heeding the two who succeeded in grasping him. Indeed, he carried both of them upon his back, but his foot slipped, and as he fell it was seen that he had not gained more than five yards.

"Three or four such rushes as that will give them a touchdown," said Jack dejectedly, and it was evident that the Tegrus sympathizers were of the same opinion, for no cheers were heard from the spectators now, and the expression of anxiety, clearly manifest on every face, showed only too plainly the fear in their hearts.

The Tegrus eleven were now preparing to fall upon the huge fellow who broke through their line so easily, and as they stood facing their opponents, every one was keeping his eyes fixed upon the dangerous player.

Suddenly the quarter-back received the ball, and with a long and beautiful pass threw it to one of the half-backs who was standing, apparently indifferent to the game, far out from his companions.

The ball was neatly caught, and then tucking it under his arm and bending low, the player began to run down the field close to the line and with almost no one before him to oppose his way.

In a moment the Tegrus players started swiftly after him, but the most of them were on the opposite side of the field and were compelled to run farther than the striped-legged Crintop man, who was speeding away swift as the wind.

Cheers now arose from the Crintop supporters, and the anxiety depicted upon the faces of the Tegrus contingent

became more and more intense. On and on ran the player, and soon Oliver and several of his men were close behind.

"Stop him! stop him! Why don't they stop him?" shrieked a little girl among the supporters of the Tegrus eleven; and Ward turned and looked at her with a glance of sympathy. He understood perfectly just what her feelings were, and perhaps was grateful to her for giving expression to them.

Meanwhile to "stop him" was the very task which the Tegrus boys were endeavoring to accomplish, though with an evident want of success that was as trying to them as it was to the most ardent of their supporters.

Oliver and several of the team were now close behind the swiftly running man. Apparently the captain of the Tegrus eleven was gaining upon his rival, but the goal was not far distant now, and his best efforts might be too late. The eager captain stretched forth his hands to grasp the shoulders of the player with the ball so near, and yet at the same time just beyond his grasp; but apparently the effort destroyed his balance, and after one or two desperate efforts to save himself, Oliver stumbled and fell.

Instantly the players behind him came running swiftly on; but stumbling over the prostrate body of their captain, they too fell heavily upon the ground, and were lying or rolling about on the grass in a vain effort to check their fall.

Meanwhile the Crintop player had outstripped all, and running leisurely now soon placed the ball behind the line directly in the rear of the goal posts. The Crintop contingent cheered lustily, but an element of chagrin was not wanting. It had required twelve minutes to gain the first touchdown, and they had confidently expected to have it within five.

"That's not so bad!" said Jack, endeavoring to display an enthusiasm he was far from feeling. "They're going to play thirty minute halves, and if we can keep it up they

can't score more than six times against us. It might be a good deal worse than that."

There was slight consolation to be gained from Jack's words, but as the rival elevens now proceeded to the center of the field again, Ward made no reply, and stood watching the players with a kind of dumb misery in his heart. He wanted to do something to aid the team. But what could he do? The Tegrus men were sturdy, determined fellows; but that huge Crintop man who came plunging through their line, much as an elephant might have pried his way through a tangled jungle, and that wonderfully swift half-back who had made the run which won the first touchdown, were not easily withstood. And yet there was an air of perfect good nature manifested by all, and only once or twice had there been any signs of trouble.

The tactics which had won the first goal, which was easily kicked when the ball had been passed out from its choice position directly behind the goal posts, were but slightly modified during the first half of the game, and when that closed, Jack's prophecy proved to have been a correct one, and the Crintop eleven had scored three times, although once they had failed to kick the goal after winning the touchdown.

During the intermission of ten minutes between the halves, players, college boys, and visitors moved in an indiscriminate mass over the field, chatting with one another or eagerly conversing with the players, whose streaming faces had been bathed in cold water, and who were chewing gum with apparently almost as much zeal as they had displayed in the contest on the field.

When the time came for the game to be resumed, Ward's heart was somewhat lighter, for on every side he had heard words of praise for the Tegrus team, who were making a much better stand against their formidable opponents than had been made in several years.

Soon after the resumption of the game, an accident caused

a delay of a few minutes. One of the players had wrenched his knee and was led limping from the field. Captain Oliver approached the crowd and summoned one of the substitute players to take the vacant place.

"There may be a chance for you, Jack, before the game's over," said Ward to his companion.

"I hope so," said Jack ; but he was too excited in watching the game to give much heed to Ward's words.

The Crintop eleven soon scored another touchdown, forcing their way down the field by sheer superiority in weight. Ten minutes, however, had again been required to accomplish the desired result, and although the Tegrus men were evidently losing strength before the rapid play of the visiting eleven, their showing was far from being a discreditable one under the circumstances, and the elation of the spectators was apparent in the increasing volume of cheers which greeted the sturdy efforts of their favorites in the second half.

Another goal had been gained after about the same amount of time had passed, and now only the last ten minutes of the half remained to be played. Both elevens were putting forth all their efforts, the one more determined than ever to prevent their opponents from increasing their score, if possible, and the other eager to redeem themselves in the brief opportunity remaining by increasing the number of touchdowns, the existing score apparently reflecting upon the prowess of the present team as compared with that of former ones.

The playing now became desperate. The boys tossed back their long hair and were chewing more determinedly upon the gum their captains had given them and which was regarded as an essential element in every college football game. Sturdy as the efforts were, it was clear that the strength of neither eleven was what it had been when the game began. They were doing their utmost, but it was becoming evident that the staying power of the Crintop eleven

was superior to that of the doughty Tegrus boys. The fear in every heart now was that under the fierce onslaught of the Crintop team the score would be very materially increased.

"Somebody else is hurt," groaned Ward, as a mass of players was untangled and the boys rose to their feet.

"It's Patterson," some one said. "He's had the breath squeezed out of him."

Whether that was the cause of the delay or no, Oliver was seen approaching the line of spectators and glancing keenly about him. Not seeing what he was looking for, he stopped, and called: "Where's Hobart? I want freshman Hobart."

"There you are!" said Ward in great excitement, quickly taking his friend's sweater and giving Jack a friendly push as the latter darted out upon the field.

The Fates were with the light-hearted lad that day. Trembling as he was in his eagerness, Jack was ready when he took his place in the line. He never knew just how it occurred, but in the very first play somehow a break was made in the hitherto impenetrable rush line of the Crintop eleven, the ball was fumbled, and Jack saw it on the ground directly before him.

Instantly picking it up, he dashed through the open place, and putting forth all his efforts, started down the field. In a moment the players of both elevens were after him in swift pursuit, but Jack was fresh and thought the great opportunity of his life had come. And of its kind, it had. On and on ran the eager freshman, and swift as was the pursuit, not one had yet been able to lay hands upon him.

As he still maintained his lead it seemed as if pandemonium reigned. The excited crowd broke in upon the field, and in the rear of the players followed the swiftly running boys. Nearer and nearer to the goal came Jack and still all the Crintop men were behind him. Shouts and calls could now be heard on every side. Hats and

canes were thrown into the air ; banners, handkerchiefs, umbrellas, anything and everything that the frantic people could seize were waved, and the excitement was more and more intense.

Not once did Jack look behind him. His eyes were fixed upon the goal posts, and close behind him he could hear the breathing of his Crintop pursuer, who even now stretched forth his hand to grasp the Tegrus player so near to scoring against the famous eleven. Nearer and nearer came Jack, and at last throwing himself across the few remaining feet, he fell heavily behind the line with the coveted ball still clasped close in his arms.

CHAPTER IX

A PROPOSITION

THE touchdown had been made and the friends of the Tegrus eleven broke forth into renewed shouts and cheers which apparently exceeded in volume all their former efforts in that line, while the excited players themselves hardly daring to trust the evidence of their own senses, hugged one another in their glee. The famous Crintop eleven had been scored against. This had not occurred in years, and the pride and enthusiasm of the Tegrus supporters knew no bounds.

Just then the attention of the Tegrus men was called to the freshman who had created all the excitement. He was lying outstretched and motionless where he had fallen behind the lines, the ball close to his side, but untouched.

Instantly Oliver and several of his team ran to Jack's aid and it was soon discovered that the lad was only suffering from having had his breath crushed out of him. The elephantine Crintop player who had forged his way so easily through his opponents' line, enraged at the success of Jack, and for the moment losing control of himself, had thrown himself on the prostrate player after he had made the touchdown. It was a cowardly act, and for a moment there were signs of trouble, but the presence of the crowd prevented what might have been a disgraceful scene, and after some brisk rubbing and the application of cold water, Jack rose and declared he was as good as ever.

Then the Crintop captain began to protest against allowing the touchdown to be counted. "Some of the men had been off-side," "the ball had not been put in play," and various other reasons were presented, but the referee was

firm, and as he had witnessed the play he refused to yield to the protests.

The ball was kicked out from the line and then after the field had been cleared of all but the players it was placed in position and Oliver prepared to kick the goal. He was very deliberate in his actions, both, as Ward innocently thought, because he wished to use up all possible time and because he was extremely desirous that no slip should occur.

When at last he had arranged matters to suit him he drew back a few steps and then with one strong kick sent the ball flying between the goal posts, and the enthusiasm of the spectators broke forth afresh. Again the banners and flags were waved and shout followed shout. Old men acted like boys and even the dignified professors were apparently as enthusiastic as the students themselves. It was a great day for old Tegrus and one not soon to be forgotten.

Only a few minutes now remained before the game would be ended, and when the rival teams lined up once more in the center of the field the onslaught of the Crintop eleven was such that the Tegrus men could not withstand it. By fierce rushes the ball was carried steadily nearer the Tegrus goal, but just before the last rush was to be made, and only a few yards remained to be covered, time was called and the game was ended.

To be sure the Tegrus eleven had been badly beaten, but they had succeeded in scoring against their bulky opponents, which was glory enough to satisfy the enthusiastic little college. Such an event was unknown in the annals of its football history, and as the joyous spectators turned to depart from the field their noisy demonstrations of delight were as marked as was the dejection of the Crintop supporters.

The Crintop players themselves quickly crowded into the stage which was waiting for them, and the Tegrus eleven started for their dressing rooms in the gymnasium. But

they were not suffered to go alone. The demonstrative college boys quickly surrounded them and as the big procession moved along the street there was hardly a cessation of the cheers for those who had so successfully upheld the "honor" of old Tegrus.

Jack came in for a goodly share of attention, and Ward, who was walking by his side, was as enthusiastic as the others. When at last they turned into the college grounds and started toward Hall, Oliver, who had not yet congratulated the freshman on his success, approached and said :

"'Twas a great day for you, freshman. You've covered yourself with glory."

Jack's face flushed with pleasure as he thanked the senior for his cordial words and modestly received the praise.

"I want to see you two to-night," added Oliver in a low voice. "Will you be in your room about half-past eight?"

"We expect to be," replied Jack.

"Then I'll be over about that time. I trust you don't feel any bad effects from that mountain of Crintop flesh that fell on you?"

"Not a bit," said Jack, with a laugh.

"That's good. Well, good-bye, freshman. I'll come over to your room to-night."

Jack, fully refreshed by a bath and his dinner, was thoroughly happy that night as he sat in the midst of the crowd of boys who assembled in his room, and Ward Hill was almost as happy as he in the success of his friend.

"I didn't know, Jack," he had said, "but you'd feel cut up about the game. The Crintop fellows just overwhelmed us, and I didn't know, you see, but you'd feel sorry you'd ever come to Tegrus. I can't help the feeling, you know, that you came here on my account and not on your own."

"Overwhelmed us, did they?" demanded Jack sharply. "Well, that's kind, I must say, after your humble servant made that touchdown, the only one in three years that's

been scored against them. That's fine, that is, for a Tegrus man to say!"

"I didn't mean that," protested Ward laughingly. "All I was afraid of was that you'd be almost sorry you came to a small college. Probably if you'd gone to Crintop you could have had a place on their eleven. You certainly did well enough to-day to deserve a place on any football team in the country."

"Not a bit of it," replied Jack, "not a bit of it. I'm more of a Tegrus man than ever I was before in my life."

Considering the fact that he had been in the college now for the long period of three weeks, Jack's words were certainly magnanimous.

The boys who gathered in their room that night, where they were almost unable to think, much less to talk, of anything but the game, sadly interfered with Ward's desire to study; but as he himself felt the contagion of the occasion he said nothing of his feelings and entered into the conversation with as much life as any.

Promptly at half-past eight Oliver appeared, and the entrance of the captain of the team was the signal for another burst of enthusiasm. All the details of the game were gone over again, and Oliver good-naturedly, and with all the condescension any senior might display, replied to their questions and explained what his hopes for the eleven were.

"It's time you were all at work," he said finally, when he perceived that there was no disposition manifested by any to depart. "Clear out, every one of you now. I want to have a little consultation with the new football star."

The boys departed without a murmur at the command of the man who, in their estimation, was but a little lower than the president of the college himself, and it might be that some of them would have disputed any tendency to rank the popular senior in the second place. There is, in all this world, no such respect shown as that of a freshman for the seniors in his college, and when in addition to the

fact that the man is not only a senior but popular, and the captain of a successful team, then respect rises almost to the borders of veneration.

As soon as the room had been cleared of its visitors, Oliver locked the door, and as he turned and took a chair he said, "Hobart, you did well to-day, and I think I shall find a place for you on the regular team. A fellow who has made the only touchdown in three years against Crintop is certainly worthy of a place on the Tegrus team. I think I'll put you in Patterson's place as end rush."

"But what will Patterson say?" protested Jack, his face nevertheless displaying the pleasure he felt at the words of the captain.

"Patterson hasn't anything to say about it," replied Oliver quietly. "I am the captain of the team, and with the help of the trainer select my men. So you can bestir yourself to hold the place at left end. But I didn't come over to talk with you about that. I've something else to say to you two fellows to-night."

As neither of them made any reply the senior continued: "I want to know squarely whether you have pledged yourselves to any of the fraternities?"

"We've been invited by two or three to join," said Jack.

"That's not what I'm asking. What I want to know is whether you have pledged yourselves or not."

"No, we haven't pledged ourselves. We didn't forget what you told us. Your advice was to go slow on that, and take plenty of time before we decided," Jack added slyly, winking at Ward as he spoke.

"That's all right," replied Oliver, though he was annoyed by Jack's words, or so Ward thought. "Now I'll come straight to business. I want you to join the Delta Betas."

The two freshmen glanced meaningly at each other, and Oliver, evidently mistaking their purpose, said hastily: "I don't have to tell you that we've got the best crowd of fellows in the college, you know that, and we've got the

best body of alumni too. We made up our minds we wanted you to join at the very beginning of the term, but the Delts don't chase after anybody, for we don't have to. Then we thought we discovered a little disposition on your part to work us, and some of the other fraternities too, and we quickly dropped out of the game. We've no use for 'flirts,' male or female, and we thought you'd either settle down after a time and drop the others, or if you didn't it would be conclusive proof that you were fellows we didn't want ourselves."

"I want to ask a question," interrupted Ward.

As the senior stopped and waited for him to begin, Ward found it difficult to speak. His face flushed and his whole bearing showed the confusion he felt. At last he said:

"Did you mean both of us? Were you—you—inviting both Jack and me to join?"

"Certainly," replied the senior. "You don't think I'd be talking in this way before you if I only meant Hobart, do you?"

"But," protested Ward, none the less delighted by the words of Oliver, "you know I'm no such popular fellow as Jack is. I haven't money, and I'm no football player——"

"Yes, but you just ought to see Ward play baseball," interrupted Jack. "He's the best player that ever went to the Weston school. Once he saved the game, and once he won it, all by his own efforts too. And when it comes to a long run, and Greek and Latin——"

"I know," said Oliver quietly. "I know all about the records of each of you. We aren't after your money, Hill, we're after you, and I'm not afraid that you'll not bring honor to the Delts. You'll have your turn in the spring when the baseball season begins, and if I'm not mistaken you may have a chance before that time."

"What do you mean?" said Ward quickly.

"Oh, nothing much, only I hear you're to be one of the fellows to try for the entrance prize."

"I'm to be one?" said Ward in surprise. "I hardly knew there was such a prize."

"Well, there is, and two of them too, for the matter of that. The first prize is a hundred dollars and the second is fifty, and both prize winners have free tuition for the entire four years, so you see it's considerable of a prize. Any freshman can go in, I suppose, but the faculty usually select and personally invite about half a dozen of the best prepared fellows and urge them to go into the contest, which comes off next week."

"How did you know I was to be invited?" inquired Ward.

"Never mind about that. What I want to know now is about the matter of your joining the Delts. What do you say?"

"I'm ready. I'll do it, and thank you," said Jack.

"And you?" said Oliver, turning to Ward.

"I can only say that I'm grateful to you just now," replied Ward. "I couldn't decide such a matter without writing home. Besides," he added with a smile, "don't you think it would be better to wait a little while before pledging ourselves? Wasn't your advice something like that?"

"Bother my advice," and Oliver laughed as he spoke. "That's all right enough before you're sure of your men, but after you've found out all there is to be known there's no use in waiting then, is there? But I don't blame you for saying you want to write home first. That's all right. But I would like to put the matter in another form, if you don't mind, after I've once made a formal offer to you. Now that Hobart's pledged himself, and I know you two don't want to be separated, and you know as well as I do the Delts are the best fraternity in every way in Tegrus, what I want to say is this: You'll be willing to say you'll join us, if your father consents, or rather, if you join any society, you'll join ours?"

Ward hesitated a moment and then began, "I don't want to appear cranky, Mr. Oliver, I really don't——"

"That's all right, freshman, don't say another word. I know I can trust you through and through. Let it stand as it is now till you're ready to speak. I mustn't stay here any longer and keep you from your work. Good-night to each of you," and after shaking hands cordially with them he departed from the room.

For a long time Ward and Jack talked together that night, and when at last they took up their books and began the preparation of their work for the morrow, it was nearly nine o'clock.

It was two hours later when Jack sleepily declared he was going to bed, but Ward decided to write two letters before he himself retired.

It was close to midnight when he rose from his table, but there were two finished letters there then, one directed to his father, and the other to Mr. Crane, of the Weston school.

CHAPTER X

DOCTOR CHLOROFORM

THE result of the two letters became apparent after a few days had passed. Unknown to Ward, Jack had also written Mr. Hill, setting forth in all his boyish enthusiasm the advantages which were certain to follow the reception into such a band of students as the Delta Beta fraternity at Tegrus was, and naïvely adding that if his room-mate were not permitted to join, he himself would be deprived of the privilege, for he should not join without his friend.

The letter Ward received from his father gave the desired permission, although there was a slight hesitation as the lad thought. Mr. Hill had been in college at the time when many of the societies had been formed, and his own impressions of their workings were not over favorable. However, he frankly confessed his ignorance concerning them as they existed in Tegrus, and expressed his entire willingness to leave the matter to the decision of Ward himself. This confidence was doubly grateful to Ward in view of his experiences in the Weston school, and perhaps his conclusion might have been somewhat different had it not been for the letter he received from Mr. Crane—a letter which he kept among his treasures and of which he has permitted our readers to have a glimpse.

THE WESTON SCHOOL, October 1, 18—.

MY DEAR HILL: Your letter of inquiry has brought before me very vividly the loss we have suffered in the departure of yourself and some of your classmates from among us. While we have a large school and apparently there is a manifest disposition to do good work, still the absence of those who have become

like younger brothers to us leaves a vacancy which no one can quite fill. However, we ought to rejoice that you have gone on a little farther in the true work of life, and if the Weston school has provided a good foundation, we ought only to be satisfied that another can build thereon.

The regrets that will come over the inevitable meetings and partings of life, which doubtless are only dimly seen by you at your age, are not what you expected to receive in this letter, and so I will come directly to the question you put to me.

Unhesitatingly I advise you to join the Delta Beta fraternity. Perhaps if the Greek letter societies were not now in existence it would be a question whether it was desirable to establish them; but they are already here and present a problem of what is, not of what might be. Some object to them because they create cliques and promote a feeling of clannishness among the students when the good of one should be the good of all. But close friendships and what might be called cliques would be formed in any event. It is so of life at large as well as of college life. "Like attracts like." "Birds of a feather flock together."

So, as the societies already exist, and as I know the Delta Betas at Tegrus are a manly lot of fellows, I sincerely trust that you will accept their invitation. It will afford you the aid of older students; will give you an opportunity to avoid many mistakes, which otherwise you might make; will bind you to your friends by strong ties; and even after you have graduated from college the good influences will not cease. Then too the social side of your own life will be more fully developed, and I do not fancy you will find the "secrets" such as will burden your soul.

Of course all this is on the supposition that it will in no way interfere with your regular college duties. The advantages of a fraternity are all secondary and supplementary, and one is never to forget that a college course is not primarily for its pleasures, or its friendships and social life, legitimate and good as these are in their way, but for the development and training of the intellectual powers, though these are by no means the only ends of college life.

Perhaps you will appreciate more thoroughly my advice when I write that I was not a member of any fraternity myself, and my judgment is formed from an appreciation of what I have lost as well as from a reasonably close observation of student life.

I shall always be pleased to hear from you and to render any assistance in my power.

With kind regards to Hobart and all the Weston boys, I am
Sincerely your friend, ALBERT M. CRANE.

Just one week after the reception of this letter Ward and Jack appeared in chapel with their vests adorned by the neat little badge composed of the two initial Greek letters of the Delta Beta fraternity. In the preceding evening they had entered that dark and mysterious room in the Delta Beta house, where Oliver had informed them that the "goat which fed upon freshmen" was kept. It may have been that his appetite was already appeased and that he allowed Ward and Jack to escape with more than the customary ease from his precincts. Of that we cannot write, for the two freshmen were singularly silent regarding the experiences of that night, and as no one outside the fraternity was under any circumstances permitted to enter the "goat's" peculiar quarters, the secrets of the chamber are still wrapped in the folds only the initiated can penetrate.

Apparently none the worse for their meeting with the festive animal, Ward and Jack displayed upon their appearance in the college chapel only a little unusual elation and a slight consciousness that these treasured "pins," emblems of so much to them, would not fail to attract the attention of their classmates. Nor were they mistaken, for many curious glances were cast at their badges, and signs of disappointment or chagrin were not wanting upon the faces of some who discovered the new relations in which the freshmen stood. But no ill-will was manifested, and soon it was regarded as a matter of course that Hill and Hobart should be counted among the "Delts."

The days of the fall term now rapidly passed. To Ward's delight he was invited to enter the contest for the entrance prize, and his pleasure and pride were not decreased when the decision was announced and he was awarded the second

prize. His classmate at Weston, Pond, was the fortunate winner of the first, and as Ward congratulated him he said :

"I knew you'd take the first, Pond, and I'm glad of it too."

"That's kind of you, Ward, and while I'm not sorry I've won, of course, I'm delighted that you took the other. It means a good deal to me. Just think of it! Free tuition for the course and a hundred dollars in money. It was that first year of yours at Weston, Ward, that helped me out, for if you'd worked then as you did in the second year, I'm afraid there wouldn't have been much use in my going into this contest."

"That was a hard year for me," said Ward soberly.

"But it wasn't all lost," replied Pond quickly. "I worked for a rich man last summer, and he was talking about the failures that business men make. He said only about five per cent. of them went through life without failing; but he went on to explain to me that though the statement was true it wasn't the whole truth. He said he'd learned more from his mistakes and failures than he ever had from his successes."

"That may all be true," said Ward quietly, "and I hope that terrible year was not altogether lost on me. I know I braced up the next year as I wouldn't have done if I hadn't slipped so in the year before; but still, Pond, I know I never can make up what I lost then. Don't you remember those words of Longfellow's poem we learned in our English class at Weston :

" Wounds of the soul though healed will ache;
The reddening scars remain, and make
Confession;
Lost innocence returns no more;
We are not what we were before
Transgression.

Well, that's the way it is with me, I'm afraid."

"Yes, Ward," said Pond eagerly; "but don't you remember too, what the very next stanza was?"

"I'm afraid I've forgotten it."

"I haven't, and I hardly think you have either. This is the way it ran :

" But noble souls, through dust and heat,
Rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger,
And conscious still of the divine
Within them, lie on earth supine
No longer."

"Thank you, Pond," said Ward warmly grasping the hand of his friend. "I'll not forget it now, anyway."

"You hadn't forgotten it. The words might have slipped away, but what they taught, never. A fellow who takes the second prize and gets fifty dollars in gold and free tuition all through his college course can't talk of failures. By the way, Ward, what do you think of the president's sermons to the boys?"

"Great. He believes in the fellows, and knows just how they feel."

"That he does. But honestly, I was all stirred up, and the wrong way too, by 'Old Chloroform's' talk the other day."

"'Old Chloroform?' I don't just understand. What do you mean? Who's he?"

"Why, Dr. Brooks. Don't you know? Haven't you ever heard of 'Chloroform'?"

"Never," replied Ward, laughing heartily. "That's what they call him, is it?"

"Yes; and I'm afraid he deserves it. I don't mean to be disrespectful, either; and as I'm hoping some day to be a preacher myself I ought not to say a word, or at least that's what I'm told. But that's the very reason I'm so stirred up. When I look around at the fellows, and say what they will, the most of them are good fellows too, and then I see such men as Dr. Chloroform—I mean Dr. Brooks—talking to them on such a subject in such a way as to put every

fellow to sleep, it makes my blood boil. They talk about the lack of religion among college boys! I don't believe there is much lack, or rather, there wouldn't be if they had live men to talk to them on the greatest of all subjects. But it isn't fair to let such a man speak in such a way."

"Isn't he a good man?"

"Good? yes. He's a saint, I suppose, as far as his daily life is concerned. If they'd let his life speak it would be a good deal better. But the truth is, the church for which he was preaching became tired of him at last, and then they raised some money for old Tegrus on the condition that Dr. Chloroform should occupy the chair they established. And what I mean is that it isn't fair to a lot of live young fellows to have a man shoved off on them because he's failed to satisfy his church people. I know I'm talking pretty straight, but it's because I feel very strongly about it. They think anybody can teach, anybody can fill a professor's chair, anybody can deal with these young fellows who are as full of life as an egg is of meat, and just because I am interested in such things, and because I hope some day to be a preacher myself, I feel more strongly than I can tell you about the matter. It's an injustice to the boys. The good old doctor's thoughts are all of what is going on in the streets of the New Jerusalem. That's all right, and I honor him for his purity and all that; but he hasn't the slightest conception of what's going on in the streets of Wrinsbuc. And when such a man once gets a 'chair'—well, you know the rest."

"'Few die and none resign,' I'm told," Ward said with a laugh. "I'll think of what you've been saying, and see what I can do to influence the trustees. You're true blue, Pond. Come over and see me in Hall, when you can."

The boys parted; but Pond's words were soon forgotten. The days which came now were busy and happy ones for Ward Hill. On half-holidays there were long excursions into the country, sailing and boating on the river, and above all, the exciting games of football between Tegrus and her

rivals. As the most of these games were with colleges of the same grade, the Tegrus team acquitted itself well, and Jack's work was of a character that won him high praise.

Meanwhile the studies were not neglected, for Ward had not forgotten the experience at Weston, and held himself doggedly to his work. Even Jack, feeling the influence of Ward's example, was doing well, and when the reports of the term's work were sent home in the Christmas vacation, great was the rejoicing when it was discovered that both freshmen were to be in the first division of the class.

It was with a slight feeling of homesickness that Ward came back to Tegrus after the first vacation was ended, and the long stretch of wintry days before him seemed almost endless. However, the winter term was to be one of the most stirring the venerable college had ever known, and in the exciting experiences both Ward and Jack were to have no small share.

CHAPTER XI

THE "BULLFROG"

TWO weeks of the winter term had soon passed and the students of old Tegrus had settled into the round of work in what was considered the dreary part of the year. There were no excursions into the country now, no football to relieve the monotony. Long before dinner time the lights flamed out from the rooms of the boys and the long evenings afforded ample opportunity for study, while the interruptions and breaks were much less than in the preceding term.

The snow covered the earth with its mantle and the ice on the river provided excellent skating, but aside from the work in the gymnasium and the assemblies in the society houses there was not much to afford relief from the unvarying round of college duties and studies, into the routine of which most of the boys had contentedly settled themselves.

Jack Hobart, as we have said, was doing much better work than he or his father had expected, thanks to the determination of his room-mate. Ward would permit nothing to interfere with the foremost purpose with which he had entered old Tegrus, a lesson respecting which he had learned something by bitter experience in the Weston school. Already Mr. Hobart was congratulating himself upon having yielded to the persuasions of his son and given his consent to Jack's going with his friend to a small college. The distractions were less, he happily thought, and the close, personal contact between professor and student was already beginning to show its beneficial effect.

But to Jack himself the problem was not yet apparently

solved. Although he was doing good work and rejoiced in the fact as much as any of his friends could, he had begun to chafe somewhat under the enforced quiet of the winter term. In the fall term his labors on the football field had provided an ample means of escape for his surplus animal spirits, but all that was gone now and there was little promise of relief from the steady "grind" of preparation for the classroom.

"I'll tell you what, Ward," said Jack one morning as he and Ward picked up their books and prepared, at the ringing of the college bell, to repair to the Greek recitation room, "I don't feel as if I could stand this much longer."

"Stand what?"

"Why, this doing nothing but study."

"It is hard," and Ward laughed. "You've had almost two weeks of it now."

"Seems more like two years. Do you know I'm a hearty convert to the belief that athletic sports are a good thing?"

"Are you? I'm surprised. How long since you came to that startling conclusion?"

"Forty-five minutes," replied Jack soberly. "But honestly, Ward, when a live young fellow has been chasing a football for two or three hours or pulling at an oar, he hasn't very much disposition left to get into mischief. Prevention is better than cure, you know. But just look at me now, will you? I feel as if I had any quantity of life and strength to spare. It's just bottled up, and I'm afraid the cork will pop or the bottle will explode before long if I don't find something to give relief."

"Perhaps you'll find it in 'Petie's' room," replied Ward as they entered the room of the Greek professor.

Ward had fallen into the way of calling the professor "Petie," not from any lack of respect, for the term among the Tegrus students was rather one of affection, and there was no member of the faculty who was more thoroughly respected by the boys. In his room there never was any

confusion or disorder, and the quiet manner in which he compelled every student to prepare his lesson and give attention to the work while there was something all the boys liked, though at times they may have rebelled against the tasks assigned them.

Ward Hill made no pretensions to the possession of any prophetic foresight, but if he had been so possessed he could not have spoken more truly than he did that morning in January when he declared to his friend that in the recitation he might find the way by which his surplus energies were to find relief.

The class was reading one of the Greek historians, and the wide-awake professor had been explaining the characteristics of some of the dead heroes for which they had never received full and due credit in their lifetime.

"But that is no unusual occurrence," said the professor. "It frequently happens that a true-hearted man must be satisfied with the simple doing of duty. The consciousness of right may be his and that may be all the visible reward he ever receives. One man labors and another man reaps the reward. Even our old college is not entirely ignorant of the meaning of that expression."

As the professor paused a moment and all the class looked up in surprise, he continued: "Perhaps I might illustrate my words by the relation of this little incident. You may know that old Tegrus was founded before the breaking out of the American Revolution. Indeed, the doors of the college were then closed for a time, as the students were for the most part in the American army. Now old Tegrus knows she did her duty in those times which tried sorely the souls of men, and the consciousness of having done her duty and aided in bringing to pass a condition which means so much for the liberty of the world perhaps ought to make her rest content. Still I have always felt that to a certain extent she is robbed of one of her most valued if not more valuable trophies. Upon the campus of the

neighboring college at Crintop there is a small cannon. It is an insignificant affair, rusted and weather-stained, and yet it was a gun which was handled by the college boys in that struggle of our fathers. And the most of the squad was composed of the students of old Tegrus."

"Why should it be on the campus of Crintop instead of here?" spoke up Jack quickly.

"That is a question which compels me to follow the example some of you have so frequently set before me," said the professor, smiling at the impulsive lad who had broken in abruptly upon him. "I am afraid I must answer, 'I am not prepared.' 'I do not know.'"

"But if the Tegrus boys manned it I should think it belonged to our college," protested Jack.

"I am not inclined to differ from you, though it is hardly a matter of sufficient importance to quarrel about. I must confess, however, that to me at least the old gun would speak a marvelous language if it were planted upon our campus. Its voice would be different from that which the buff coats heard, but its presence would be none the less an inspiration. As the cannon was used in a neighboring swamp, I believe, it gained the *sobriquet* of the 'Bullfrog'; but it has been long since its croaking voice was heard. All this, however, is a divergence and is not Greek. Hobart, you may translate, beginning, if you please, at the top of the page."

A suppressed laugh ran through the class at the sudden change in the professor's manner and the unexpected invitation for Jack to recite. Perhaps some of the boys thought Jack was only trying to lead the professor on to talk and so consume the time of the recitation period. Some ground was afforded for the opinion as Jack stumbled through the lesson, but in reality the freshman was thinking much more of that cannon the professor had alluded to than of the Greek text before him, and as a natural consequence a divided mind brought forth unsatisfactory results.

That same evening when about half of their studying had been done, Jack suddenly broke out and said to Ward: "I tell you, Ward, there's no reason in this world for that 'Bullfrog' being left where it is now!"

"Bullfrog? What in the world are you talking about?" replied Ward in astonishment, looking up from his Greek lexicon and retaining his finger on the page as he glanced across their common study table at his friend.

"What I say. That 'Bullfrog' over on the Crintop campus."

"Oh, do you mean that cannon 'Petie' was telling about to-day?"

"What else could I mean? It's a shame it isn't here where it belongs."

"So it is, but what are you going to do about it? It's been there a hundred years and it's too late to disturb it now."

"Not much, it isn't! It's all the more reason for putting it where it belongs."

"They would have done that years ago if they had thought they could."

"Well, because they thought they couldn't isn't any reason for thinking we can't, is it?" persisted Jack. "I never thought very much of tying up your opinions to what some one said or thought a hundred years ago. It strikes me that these old fellows are to-day just a little bit behind the times, to say the least. I'd as soon wear their clothes as take all their ideas."

"I'm afraid your bump of reverence is not very well developed," Ward said, settling back in his chair and regarding his friend with a smile. "What do you propose to do about it? Are you, a freshman at Tegrus, going over to Crintop to beg them to give up that which 'Petie' says belongs to us?"

"Nay, verily," replied Jack decidedly. "It was bad enough for them to use us as a mop on the football field

without giving them a chance to add insult to injury. No sir! I'm not thinking of any such fool trick as that!"

"What do you intend to do, then?"

"Listen, Ward, and I'll tell you. That cannon belongs to us. 'Petie' says so and you and I know it is so. Now why should we go over to Crintop and ask for permission to take what belongs to us already? For the life of me I can't see any sense in such a move as that."

"Go on," said Ward quietly, though it was apparent to his friend that he had no lack of interest now.

"Of course there'd be no use in going over there in the daytime. They outnumber us five to one, and as they may have a mistaken notion that the cannon belongs to them just because it's been on their campus a hundred years there might be trouble, you see, over their conscientious objections to our actions. Some of the most troublesome men in all the world have been those who have been misled by their own consciences. So as I don't want to lead the little Crintop lads into any unnecessary deeds of violence, the better way is to go over there quietly some night, and without making any disturbance, just pick the 'Bullfrog' up and bring him back to the place for which he has been pining, lo, these many years."

"What would you do? Put him in your pocket, or would you bring him on your shoulders?"

"Neither, my friend, neither. There must be a number of fellows in our class who have college spirit enough to go over to Crintop with us and help restore to old Tegrus one of her long-lost possessions. Furthermore, now is the very best of all times. There's a moon and it doesn't rise too early. There's snow on the ground and that will make the hauling easy. Besides, Crintop isn't more than eighteen or twenty miles away, is it?"

"I think not," said Ward soberly. "About twenty I think is what they say."

"Very well. What's to prevent us from hiring a four-

horse rig and going over there to-morrow night? We ought to go before the snow melts, and a four-horse arrangement will enable us to carry a good-sized load of fellows over and waste no time either in getting back to Wrinsbuc after we've loaded up his majesty, the 'Bullfrog.'"

"How many fellows do you think ought to go?"

"I should say not over six or eight. We want enough to carry the cannon, but not one more. If we get more, the scheme will leak out and the whole plan will be spoiled."

"That's right."

"And then, Ward, we want every fellow that goes to be a freshman. You see, if we can keep it all within our class it will bring all the glory to the best set of fellows old Tegrus ever had, and it will be something to make every class that enters for the next century remember us."

"What will you do with the cannon after you get it over here?"

"Oh, that's something to be settled later. The first thing to do is to get it where it belongs and that is in Wrinsbuc. Then we can hide it somewhere until the first wind blows over, for there may be a little ruffling of the breeze when the Crintop men discover the 'Bullfrog' has come into his own again. We'll fix up something to rest it on for a while and can set it up on the campus some night, and in the morning there it will be right where all the college can see it. I think the faculty, or students, or alumni, or all together, will fix up a good foundation for it. All that comes afterward. The main thing is to get the cannon."

"What fellows will you take?"

"That's to be considered. Let's go over the list together."

Jack produced the list of his classmates and together the two boys began to study it. Ward was as eager and enthusiastic over the project as his room-mate now. It is to be feared that the ethics of the proposed reprisal had not been very carefully pondered, but neither stopped to consider that. Old Tegrus had been for a century deprived of her

rightful possessions, and it had remained for the wonderful class to which Jack and Ward belonged to restore to her her own.

A half-hour afterward both boys slipped out of Hall and together started for the rooms of the classmates whom they had decided to invite to join them in their attempt to regain the lonely, long-lost, and doubtless long-time homesick gun which their ancestors had manned in those far-away days when they too had been freshmen in "young" Tegrus.

CHAPTER XII

THE EXPEDITION TO CRINTOP

THE first room to which Ward and Jack went was that of two of their classmates, Bartol and Plumer. As these freshmen were also fellow-members of the Delta Beta fraternity, there was an added reason for confidence in them, and as a result of the interview the four boys speedily made their way together to Dana's room.

He too was as willing to join as his classmates had been, and then all five proceeded to the room of Sweet, another member of their class. Sweet, however, was more difficult to persuade, and his visitors were about to leave him, after pledging him to secrecy, when he suddenly changed his tone and said :

"Well, fellows, I shall go in. I'm a little dubious about it though, for I don't believe the Crintop men are going to sit calmly down and let us carry off their old relic. They'll be over here after it pretty soon if the game they put up on the football field is anything to judge them by."

"Let them get it if they can," said Jack boldly. "That's an after consideration, anyway. What we're after now is to get the poor old 'Bullfrog' and let him croak for the next hundred years on the campus here. Turn about is only fair play, the best way you can fix it."

"What time do you intend to start?" inquired Sweet.

"To-morrow night about nine o'clock. I'm going to look out for the team myself. I'll have four good horses and a sleigh that will take us over the snow at a great rate. We'll get in Crintop about half-past eleven. Probably all the Crintop men will be in bed by that time. We may have a little work to do to free the 'Bullfrog' from his

chains, for though I haven't seen the old fellow, I understand he rests on a little pedestal, and is only held down by a chain on each side. We may have to break or cut them."

"How do you intend to do that?"

"We've got it all fixed. We'll take some chisels and hammers along. I'll look after that part too. Probably we'll have to put somebody on guard while we're working, but that won't be very much of a task. You'll go, won't you, Sweet?"

"Yes, I'll go. When do we start?"

"I didn't think it would do to drive through the town with that four horse arrangement. It would be too much like advertising the whole affair, and whatever we do we don't want to do that. We ought to keep it perfectly quiet and never let anybody suspect what we have in mind until they wake up some morning and see the old gun pointing up at them from the campus."

"If you succeed in getting it over here to-morrow night, you won't try to set it up the same night, will you?"

"Yes, sir; that's just what we'll do. We must fix it all up good and straight while we're at it. I'm going to order a wooden frame to be made to-morrow, and have it left in my room in Hall. Of course, it'll only be a light and temporary affair, but it'll do for the present. We can handle it easily, and can put it out on the campus when we come back. If anything should happen that we couldn't get the gun why no one will be the wiser. After we've captured it, then it'll be the turn of the college and the alumni to look out that it's properly mounted, you see. Our work will be done, anyway."

"When did you say we were to start?"

"Meet in our room at nine o'clock, and then we'll walk up College Avenue and the team will be waiting for us by the river."

"Who's going to be the driver?"

"I've thought about that. At first my opinion was that

we'd better attend to that ourselves, but I've about made up my mind we'd better take a driver along with us. What do you think?"

"I think you'd better take a driver. That will leave all six of us free to look after the cannon, and it may take a good half-dozen to do that properly. Besides, there isn't one of us who could handle four horses on a cold winter night."

"Right you are. Well, the thing's as good as done now. Six such fellows as we are can't fail, and we've got right and justice and all that sort of thing on our side too. Good-night, Sweet. Don't fail, for we shall count upon you. We've just got to have that brawny arm of yours along with us, you see."

"I'll bring it with me," said Sweet with a laugh, as his visitors departed. "I'll not fail to be on hand at nine o'clock."

The plotters were particularly rejoiced to have Sweet join them, for he was one of the strongest men in his class, and it was considered as not improbable that in lifting and carrying the iron cannon his assistance might be required.

After going over the entire affair once more with their companions and providing for all conceivable emergencies, Ward and Jack returned to their room and endeavored to give themselves to their studies. With Jack this was almost impossible, but Ward held himself resolutely to his task, and although thoughts of the cannon and the stealthy visit to Crintop would at times obtrude themselves, he succeeded fairly well in doing his work.

About half-past ten Jack threw down his books and declared that he was going to bed. Ward, however, declared that he must spend an additional hour and a half upon the lessons of the day that would follow the adventure, for there would be no opportunity for studying on the following evening.

"Bother the lessons of that day!" said Jack. "It'll be

time enough to look after them when they come. I'll take my chances on not being called up!"

"I'd rather bother the lessons than have the lessons bother me," replied Ward quietly. "I can't take any chances, Jack. You know I've had one experience in getting behind in my work before I came up to old Tegrus, and I can tell you, it's all I want. If I once let anything break into my work it's all up with me. I've just got to keep up with my work whatever happens."

"You're right, Ward; I'll go and bathe my eyes in cold water and then come up and keep you company. What a fortunate fellow I am in having you for a chum. I'm afraid I'd be like Livey, and take the freshman year three or four times over if you weren't here."

It was late when at last the boys turned out their lights and prepared for bed, but a goodly portion of their work for the next two days had been done, and under the feeling of security which it gave them sleep came much sooner than otherwise it might have done. As it was, on the following morning Jack declared himself to be much depressed, as he had had some horrible dreams, in which the "Bullfrog" had openly rebelled and croaked its alarm to the Crintop boys, who had rushed forth to its assistance and soon put the invaders to flight.

"It would be hard if anything of that kind should happen, wouldn't it, Ward?" said Jack in all seriousness.

"As hard as it would be unlikely," said Ward. "The Crintop fellows may try to drive us off, but I'm not afraid of the old frog doing any croaking."

"It's a pretty bold piece of work though."

"Do you want to give it up?"

"Not much, I don't," said Jack quickly. "The old gun belongs to us, 'Petie' says, and there is no reason in the world why we shouldn't take it, is there?"

"None, except that I fancy the Crintop fellows may not take exactly the same view of it that our good old professor

of Greek does. You see they've had it on their campus so long that they may honestly think it belongs there."

"They'll know better after to-night," said Jack gleefully, all his interest in the enterprise having apparently returned in full force. "It'll be something for the old college never to forget, and will make the freshman class the envy of every class that's ever been in old Tegrus, or ever will enter, for that matter. It's great, Ward, that's what it is! I don't see how my massive brain ever contrived to think out so marvelous a scheme."

Many were the meaning glances exchanged that day between the plotting freshmen as they met one another on their way to and from the rooms in the recitation buildings, but no words were spoken, and the scheme was kept a profound secret. It was evident that all six of the boys were agreed, and that everything relating to the expedition of that night was understood.

Promptly at nine o'clock three of their classmates appeared in Ward's room, and a few minutes afterward Sweet came. All the boys had brought heavy mufflers and overcoats with them, and were prepared for the long, cold ride.

"Come on, fellows, we'll be moving up the avenue," said Jack as he drew on his own heavy coat. "We don't want to waste any time on the start."

As they entered the hall they met the sophomore, Russell, who stopped a moment as he saw them and said suspiciously: "What are you freshmen up to?"

"Don't bother us, Anceps," replied Jack. "We've weighty matters to consider, and can't waste any time on benighted sophs."

"You'd better take me along for a protector," said Russell. "It's late for freshmen to be out. You'll get into trouble, I know you will, from the way you're dressed up. I know what you've got in your innocent little heads to do."

"Good-night, Anceps," called Jack from the bottom of the stairs. "If you're so well informed about the doings

of the freshmen, you want to look out. Better men than you have been disposed of because they possessed more knowledge than their craniums could hold. If you should spring a leak you'd have to be looked after."

"You don't suppose he does know anything of our plans, do you?" said Sweet anxiously.

"Not a thing," said Jack. "The only trouble that may come will be from his having met us all together and bundled up as we are. I think we'd better separate and go up the avenue two by two."

The suggestion was carried out, and when Ward and Jack, who formed the rear guard, arrived at the appointed place they found the long sleigh there and their classmates snugly ensconced within it.

It was but the work of a minute for them to clamber in, and then Jack gave the word to the driver, who spoke to his restive horses, and the long journey was begun.

The night was clear and starlighted, and the crisp snow creaked under the smooth runners of the sleigh. The air was bracing, but well wrapped as the boys were, they gave little heed to the cold. The very horses seemed to enter into the spirit of the affair, and it required all the driver's strength to keep them from running.

Occasionally the light from the window of some farmhouse shone out upon the road, but for the most part the country people had retired long before this, and it might have been better for the sleigh load of boys if they had followed so worthy an example. But the thoughts of that old cannon of which Tegrus had been unjustly deprived banished all else from their minds for the time, and as they sped on mile after mile, their feelings became more and more elated. One of the boys broke forth into a college song, but he was instantly rebuked by Jack, who was the acknowledged leader of the party. Nothing was to be done which might in any way inform the people in the farmhouses they passed that college boys were out that night.

As the time passed the boys became more and more quiet. Perhaps the serious nature of their undertaking became more apparent as they drew near to the village of Crintop. However, if any one was afraid he took good pains to conceal his fears from his companions, and whatever the feelings in the heart of each boy may have been, so far as appearances went he thought he was the only one to have any misgivings.

"That's Crintop ahead of us there," said the driver at last.

The boys looked up quickly at his words, and not far in advance of them saw the few twinkling lights that indicated the position of the old college town.

"I think," said Jack, "we'd better leave the horses and sleigh out by the edge of the town and two of us go up to the college grounds and look over the situation."

"Do you know just where the cannon is?" inquired Sweet.

"Yes," said Jack. "It's right in front of the library building. We can find it easily enough. If you fellows don't object, I think Ward and I had better go up alone first and then come back and report."

Their companions agreed, and then the two boys, first placing chisels and hammers in the pockets of their overcoats, leaped out of the sleigh and started toward the Crintop campus.

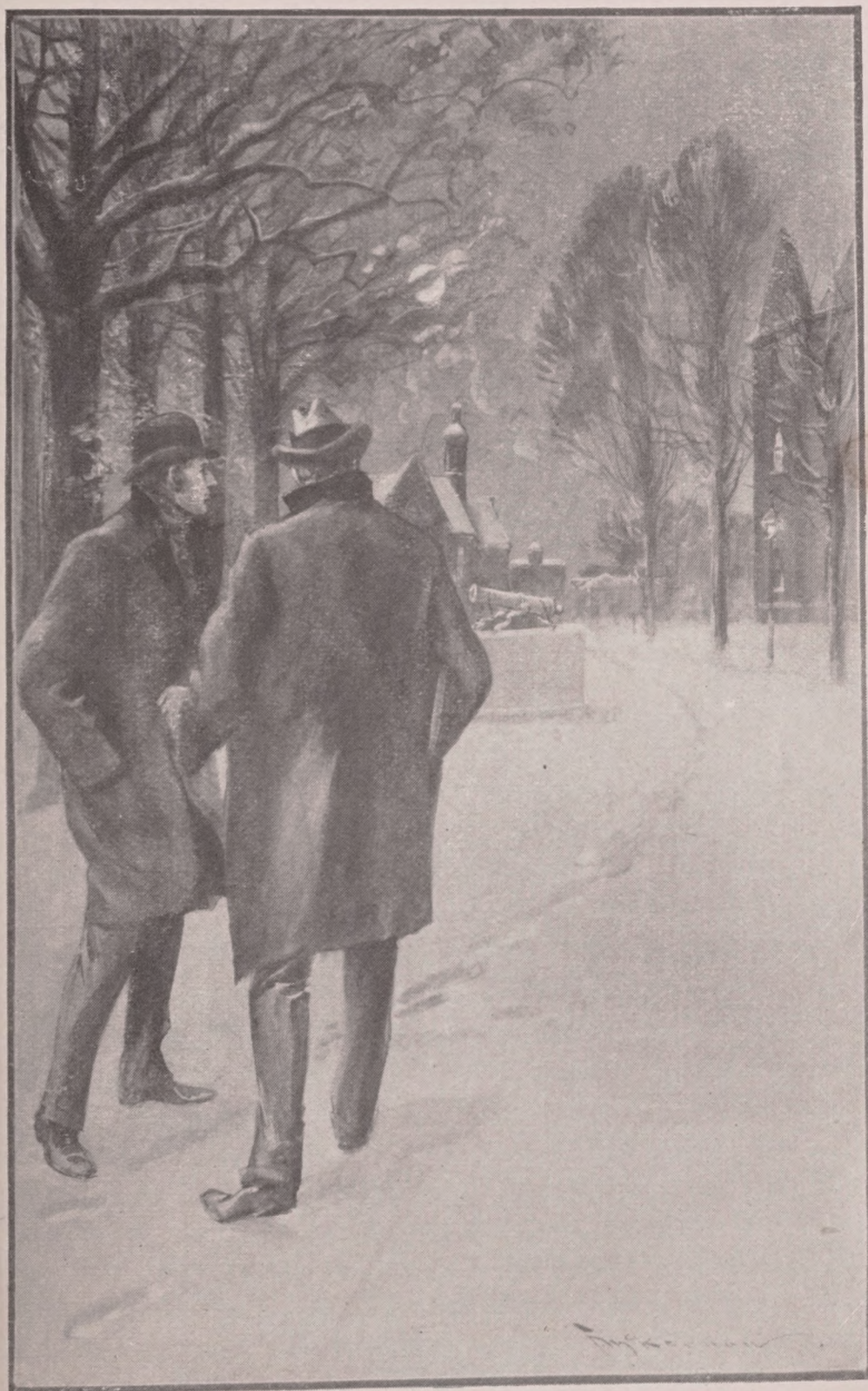
They saw no one as they walked along the village streets and then turned in upon the college grounds. What magnificent buildings they were, and how many of them too! As Ward looked about him in the clear starlight his first feeling was one of depression. How much Crintop had and how little was Tegrus in comparison! Perhaps Jack would regret now that he had ever gone to the smaller college.

Only a few lights here and there could be seen in the windows. Evidently Crintop was resting in peace all un-

suspicious of the attack which was about to be made upon one of her venerable possessions. And yet it was not hers, or at least so Ward and Jack fondly believed, and they were only restoring to old Tegrus what for a long time had really been hers.

"Here we are," whispered Jack as they stopped near the great library building.

Directly in front of them, mounted upon a stone pedestal, was a small iron cannon. A hasty examination confirmed Jack's statement, and both boys then knew that they had found the object of their search.



"They saw no one."



CHAPTER XIII

ON THE CRINTOP CAMPUS

THE two boys stopped for a moment and if each had permitted the other to know what his true feelings were, perhaps the escapade would have ended there and then ; but as neither was aware of his companion's alarm both remained firm.

Meanwhile the old cannon stood silent before them, almost appealing for aid, as they fondly thought, and soon Jack, who was the first to recover from his momentary fear, turned and whispered to Ward :

"Let's cut the chains before we go back and report. We're here and all alone, as far as I can see, and we might as well go ahead."

"All right," replied Ward, "though it might be better to have a watch stationed ; we may be interrupted in our work. Still, we can try it if you want to."

Instantly the boys drew forth their hammers and chisels from their pockets and began to cut. The chains were not heavy, and had been so long left unmolested that they were covered with rust. As the sharp strokes of the hammers rang out in the frosty air the boys frequently paused, fearful that the sounds would alarm some of the sleeping Crintop students. But they were not interrupted and proceeded rapidly with their task.

It was slow work, however, and the hands of the workmen were soon numb with cold. The excitement, the fear of detection, and the eager desire to complete the task, provided the necessary stimulus and soon fifteen minutes had passed. The stars overhead seemed to wink and twinkle as if they too understood what the Tegrus boys were try-

ing to do. The tall leafless trees upon the campus occasionally sighed as if they sympathized with old Crintop in her prospective loss. But pausing only occasionally to warm their hands and peer carefully about them for the appearance of an enemy, Ward and Jack worked steadily on.

"Hold on, Ward, what's that?" said Jack excitedly, in a low whisper.

As both stood erect and listened, through the frosty air came the sounds of a college song. Plainly a number were singing, and were approaching the college buildings.

"What shall we do, Ward?" said Jack quickly, for while he was the first to propose a plan, he was accustomed to look to his room-mate for direction when trouble or perplexity arose.

"Put your tools in your pocket," replied Ward hastily, "and we'll start toward one of the college buildings. The Crintop fellows will think we are some of their own men out late like themselves."

Ward's suggestion was acted upon instantly, and striving to appear indifferent and as if they were only returning to their rooms, they both walked along the path which led to one of the largest dormitories.

Whether it was because they had been deceived in the direction from which the sounds of the singers had seemed to come, or that another crowd of noisy collegians met them, they never knew; but as they turned the corner of the building they found themselves face to face with a band of twenty Crintop men.

Dropping their heads and hardly daring to look before them, the two intruders stepped out of the path to permit the others to pass them, but to their consternation they discovered that they were not to be let off so easily.

"Here you!" called one of the party, "who are you? What are you doing out here at this time of night?"

"We're Ward and Johns," replied Jack meekly.

"What are you? Freshmen?"

"Yes."

"Don't you know freshmen are not allowed to be out as late as this? Come, now! give an account of yourselves. Where do you room?"

"In the dormitories," replied Jack, after hesitating.

"Glad to hear it! glad to hear it! Which dormitory are you in, freshmen?"

"I can't tell you."

Jack spoke truly, more truly than he knew, for not only was he in ignorance of the names of the Crintop buildings, but he decided it was impossible for him to mention the name of Hall under the circumstances.

"Don't know which dormitory you are in, freshmen? That's a good one. You'll lead your class, you will. All right! You needn't tell us the name, for I see you aren't as green as you look. Just take us up to your room now. That's all we want."

For a moment both Jack and Ward thought they had made matters worse and they were on the point of darting from their companions and putting all their hopes in flight, desperate as that venture might be.

Their fears were relieved however, when one of the company said to the spokesman: "Oh, hold on, Tom! You've frightened the poor freshmen out of their seven senses. They couldn't give you their own names now if you asked them. Let's make them give a cheer for the sophomore class in old Crintop and let them go for to-night. We'll remember their names and look after them later."

"All right," replied the one who had been the spokesman. "Now then, freshmen," he added, turning to Ward and Jack, "you know that the sophomore class is the best class in old Crintop, don't you? Speak up now and don't be bashful!"

"We haven't been here very long and aren't acquainted with very many of the students yet," replied Jack, trying to imitate the appearance of a timid freshman.

His reply evidently delighted his hearers, and shouts of laughter greeted his response.

"Well then, freshmen, give the class you'll soon know more about a good rousing cheer, will you? Now then! One, two, three!"

Ward and Jack obediently complied and gave the desired cheers for the most remarkable class ever assembled within the venerable walls of old Crintop. At least their companions so declared it to be, and at that moment the two trembling Tegrus freshmen were not inclined to waste any time in disputing the statement.

"Very good, freshmen. Now once more. Don't be afraid. Let your voices out! Make the welkin ring, so to speak!"

Again Ward and Jack gave the desired cheers.

"Oh, come on, Tom, it's too cold to be standing here listening to freshmen."

"Wait till they sing us a song. Now, freshmen, sing us 'In Praise of Old Crintop.' You know that, don't you, if you have forgotten the place where you live."

"Oh, bother 'In Praise of Old Crintop!' You can stay here and listen to freshmen yelpings if you want to, but I'm going to get in out of the cold."

To the inexpressible delight of Ward and Jack the company all seemed to agree with the sentiments of the last speaker, and after bestowing a few parting words of warning and advice upon the belated freshmen, as they all supposed them to be, the band departed, singing the song themselves which they had demanded of the Tegrus boys.

"That was a close call," whispered Jack with a sigh of relief, as he saw the Crintop sophomores enter the dormitory. "I didn't know a word of that song."

"That wouldn't have made a bit of difference. You'd have sung it just as well as you would if you had known every word. Come on, now; we must not stay here and wait for any more sophomores to come."

"Where, Ward? We can't go back to the cannon yet."

"We don't want to. We'll go back where we left the fellows and get them to come and stand guard."

In a few moments they returned to the place where they had left their companions. The boys were walking up and down the lonely street striving to keep warm in the winter night. The driver had covered his horses with double blankets and was as eager as the boys when Jack and Ward joined them to learn of the result of their efforts.

Their report was given in a few words, and then, at their request, the other four boys returned with them, and taking their places at various stations on the grounds, walked slowly back and forth, while Ward and Jack hastily resumed their interrupted labors upon the chains which bound the old cannon to its pedestal. Several times they paused in their task, thinking that they had been discovered, but each alarm proved to be false, and after a brief time the chains fell apart and they knew the first of their efforts was completed.

Quickly summoning their companions, they adjusted the ropes, and were delighted to find that the cannon was even lighter than they had thought and that they could easily lift it. It was decided not to drag it over the snow, at least while they were on the college grounds, for fear that its trail might reveal the way, and perhaps the method of its departure from the place where it had rested for so long a time; but as soon as the panting boys had brought their burden out into the street, they all grasped the ropes and dragged it hastily over the road.

In a brief time they came to the place where the sleigh was waiting, and then lifting the cannon into the box, they covered it over with straw and hastily took their places. The driver meanwhile had not been idle, and as soon as he received the word that all things were ready, he spoke to his horses and the long ride back to Wrinsbuc began.

Thus far they had been successful, and forgetting their

weariness, with the passing of the immediate peril and excitement, the boys gave themselves up to the thoughts of what would occur on the morrow when the students of old Tegrus should discover the presence of the venerable relic on their own campus, the place where it had belonged for a hundred years past.

"I'm not thinking so much about what the Tegrus fellows will be saying as I am what will take place in Crintop when they find out the old gun has gone to its rightful owners. Bah! I'd like to give another cheer for those sophomores! Just think of it, fellows, actually cheering for a parcel of noisy Crintop sophomores! I'll have to use soap and water for a month or my mouth will hold the bitter taste of it," said Hobart.

"I wouldn't have cheered for them," said Sweet.

"Oh, yes, you would, my little lad," replied Jack. "You'd have even sung 'In Praise of Old Crintop' just as we were about to do. My friend Ward here was kind enough to inform me that it wouldn't have made any difference in my singing whether I knew the song or not. But that's a libel."

"So it is, Jack," said Bartol, with a hearty laugh. "Even the Tegrus sophs enjoy your songs. One of them who takes his meals where I do could hardly keep back the tears when he was telling us at the table about the way you sang for them."

"Who was that sophomore?" said Jack soberly.

"Russell."

"Ah, well would it have been for the gentle Anceps if he had never been born! But then he's no judge of music. I don't believe he'd even know the 'Bullfrog's' voice if he heard it. I say, fellows, let's let the 'frog' croak once after we've got him set up on the campus. What do you say?"

"So say we all of us," replied Bartol. "I'll go over to my room and get a little charge of powder I have there and come over and give it to the gun."

All eagerness now, the boys did not enjoy the remainder of the long ride. The stars threw their sparkles down upon them in vain, for not one of the band gave them the slightest heed. The creaking runners, the fast-flying horses, apparently as eager as the students to return to Wrinsbuc, were all ignored, and when an hour afterward they entered College Avenue, the boys decided to trust to not being discovered and drive up in front of the college chapel where the cannon was to be planted.

The horses were walking as the sleigh turned in at the college gate, and the boys carefully watched the dark buildings, but not a light was to be seen in any window, and soon the driver stopped as they came in front of the chapel.

The boys carefully lifted out the cannon, and after the sleigh had departed, Jack and Bartol left their companions on guard and went swiftly to their rooms, the one to get the wooden frame which was to serve as a temporary pedestal, and the other for the powder which was to enable the "Bullfrog" to utter its first croak as a sign of rejoicing in being restored to its rightful position on the campus of old Tegrus.

Both boys soon returned, and then the cannon was lifted upon the framework and placed in the desired position. The powder which Bartol provided was poured into the muzzle, and after ramming home a sufficient amount of stiff paper to serve as wadding, and a few other necessary details were looked to, Bartol produced a long fuse.

"That will take ten minutes to burn and give us time to get back to our rooms," he said, "before the gun goes off. I hope it'll work."

The fuse was then lighted, and like a band of imps, perhaps more like them than any one of them realized at the time, all of the boys turned and were soon hastening to their rooms.

CHAPTER XIV

THE EXCITEMENT IN OLD TEGRUS

WARD and Jack ran silently through the hall and carefully closed the door after they had entered their room. Then trembling in their excitement, they took their stand by the window, and looking out over the campus, waited for the report which the old cannon was to make. The campus before them was flooded with moonlight and was almost as light as day. The leafless trees stood out in the shining radiance, and the college buildings, dark and grim, were like sentinels. The "Bullfrog," for whose possession they had labored so hard that night, could be distinctly seen, and there was a feeling of deep satisfaction in the hearts of the freshmen, who fondly hoped that the rightful place for the old Revolutionary relic at last had been found.

The minutes slowly passed, but the stillness of the winter night was not broken in upon. At last, disappointed and unable to bear the suspense any longer in silence, Jack said :

"The thing isn't going off, Ward. We sha'n't hear any report to-night."

"Perhaps the fuse takes more time than we thought," replied Ward. "Wait a minute ; it's too soon to give up yet."

The boys waited, but the silence still was unbroken. The tall trees swayed in the light wind, the crisp snow sparkled in the starlight, and the great buildings were sombre and silent ; but still the longed-for report was not heard. Twenty minutes had now passed since the plotters had returned to their room, and they could no longer doubt that the cannon was not to be discharged.

"I'm going out to light the fuse again," said Jack at last. "It's too bad after all our trouble to have the frog go back on us like that."

"No, don't go out again," replied Ward quickly. "We've done enough for one time, and if we're going to get any sleep to-night we've got to turn in now. Let it go. The cannon's here and that's enough."

"All right," said Jack, unable to repress his feeling of disappointment. "There'll be time enough to hear it speak its piece, I suppose. Still, I should have been glad to hear the old gun, for it would have been a fitting climax to the distinguished labors of the night. I wonder what those Crintop sophs are thinking of now?"

"I don't know; but I'm pretty well informed as to the thoughts and feelings of a couple of the Tegrus freshmen. I'm tired and sleepy, and am going to bed. The morrow will take care of the things of the morrow, I think."

The light was quickly extinguished, and soon the two Tegrus freshmen were sleeping as soundly as if capturing cannon on the Crintop campus was a matter of every-day occurrence.

It was broad daylight when they awoke on the following morning, and the first impulse of each boy was to leap out of bed and see if the old cannon was still in its place. The gun was still where they had left it, and then the freshmen hastily dressed and started for their boarding place.

"You're late, fellows," called Bartol as he met them on the way. "Everybody's had breakfast. Hurry up and come back to the chapel. There'll be something to see this morning, unless I'm greatly mistaken."

Ward and Jack quickened their pace, and ran all the way to Mrs. Platte's, where they were mildly scolded for their tardiness, but nevertheless were well looked to by their kind-hearted hostess.

When they departed from her house the chapel bell was ringing, and delaying in Hall only long enough to seize their

books, they ran swiftly out of the building and started across the campus.

As they approached the chapel a crowd of students assembled about the place where the cannon had been deposited, at once proclaimed the fact that something out of the usual order was occurring, and glancing meaningly at each other, they both increased their speed and soon joined the assembly.

"What's all the excitement?" asked Jack of Oliver as he and Ward approached.

"Look there! You can see for yourselves," replied the senior, pointing as he spoke toward the cannon.

"What is it? I don't see anything to get so excited about," replied Jack demurely. "It's only an old rusty cannon, as far as I can see. What is there so very remarkable about that?"

"Why, freshman, don't you know? Every one thinks it's the gun which was over on the Crintop campus. There's been a tradition that by rights it belonged to old Tegrus, and my candid opinion is that some of our fellows have gone over there and proceeded to use *vim et manus*."

"You don't mean it!" exclaimed Jack in apparent astonishment. "I don't know anything about your *vim et manus*, as you call it; but if the old gun belongs to Tegrus then I'm glad she's got it. Aren't you?"

"Yes," replied the senior dubiously; "but it's a question how long it will stay here."

Jack and Ward waited for no further words, but pushed their way into the crowd, and soon were standing near the cannon. Looking up they saw Bartol and Plumer near them, and a meaning glance passed between them; a glance, as Ward thought, intercepted by Russell, the sophomore, whom he perceived to be regarding them intently.

But there was no time for delays and explanations now. The crowd of noisy college boys were pushing one another in their desire to obtain a glimpse of the cause of all the ex-

citement. Laughter and shouts continually arose from the assembly, and soon the conclusion at which Oliver had arrived, that the cannon had been brought from Crintop, was accepted by all. Some of the students declared they recognized the venerable relic, and had frequently seen it upon the campus of the neighboring college.

The chapel bell was now giving out the sharp, short strokes, indicating that the last call for attendance was about to be made. With a shout and a cheer, in which all the students joined, the assembly broke up, and the boys made a rush for the chapel door, and in noisy confusion took their seats.

The good old president was to conduct the services that morning, and he looked at the entering students with mild reproof; but he said nothing concerning the unusual delay, and soon rose to announce a hymn.

As the boys took their books, Ward saw that Bartol was regarding him with a peculiar look, but unable to understand what meaning it was intended to convey, he found the hymn, and then rose with his companions to join in the singing.

The first stanza had not been completed when suddenly there was a loud report heard, as if it were just outside the chapel.

Instantly the singing stopped, and for a moment the students looked at one another as if they could not understand what had occurred. Then it seemed to dawn upon them all at once that the cannon in which they had been so much interested had been discharged.

Again Ward saw the peculiar smile upon Bartol's face, and turning to Jack, he whispered: "Bartol has finished it this time. He's lighted the fuse again."

Jack's only reply was an expressive shrug of his shoulders. The song was then finished, although the volume of sound seemed to be remarkably scant, and the further exercises of the morning were conducted by the president, who made

no reference, however, to the interruption which had just occurred.

Still there was evident a restlessness and uneasiness throughout the college body, and no sooner had the final words of the president been pronounced than with a wild rush the boys all made for the door.

As they came out upon the campus a cloud of smoke could still be seen, but the venerable cannon was standing just as they had left it a few moments before, and apparently unconscious that anything unusual had taken place.

All through the day the excitement among the Tegrus students continued, and many were the conferences held. Whenever and wherever a few of the boys met, the cannon immediately became the subject of conversation, and many were the conjectures as to the means by which it had been transported, and who were the students engaged in the adventure.

No one had yet suspected the true instigators, or at least so Ward and his room-mate thought, although the former was not altogether satisfied that Russell was without suspicions.

These were confirmed when early that evening the sophomore entered their room, and ignoring the presence of a half-dozen freshmen, who had assembled there and were eagerly conversing upon the exciting events of the day, he drew from his pocket two papers, and holding them up before him, said :

“Have you seen the latest?”

Instantly all in the room were attentive, and when he perceived that he had produced the desired effect Russell continued : “Here’s the Rontent *Evening News*, and it’s got a column on the affair. Shall I read it to you?”

Rontent was a neighboring city, and the *Evening News* was one of its most sensational papers, and famous for the glaring way in which it served up for its readers even the mildest events of the day.

Russell's words were sufficient to call forth an eager request from all in the room for him to read. Accordingly, after displaying the striking headlines with which the narrative was introduced, he read the sensational report from Crintop of the disappearance of the old cannon from its long resting place on the campus, and the indignation which was felt by all the college at the outrage. Apparently, however, it was regarded as only a "freshman trick," and there was not the slightest suspicion that any one not connected with Crintop had been engaged in the affair.

The reading was greeted by shouts and derisive remarks from the assembled freshmen, but Russell speedily interrupted them by saying :

"Hold on, freshmen ! I'm not done with this yet. I've got an early copy of this evening's *Wrinsbuc Journal*, and that gives another version. If you'll keep still I'll read that too."

Order was at once restored, and then Russell read the account which the local paper gave. In this the suspicion which the boys felt that the cannon had been taken from the Crintop campus was stated as a fact. Then followed some glowing declarations that the weapon really belonged to the local college and ought years before to have been placed in its proper position on the Tegrus campus. " 'Tegrus men had dragged it over the bloody sands in that most illustrious period of our great nation's history ; Tegrus men had rammed home the balls which wrought immeasurable destruction upon the arrogant foes of our then infant land ; Tegrus blood had stained the iron with its own crimson hues, and for our own part we rejoice that instead of the fathers have sprung up the sons as bold of countenance, as brave of heart, as unyielding in their loyalty as ever were those warriors, who, clad in buff and blue, dared to face the scarlet-clad hirelings of the recreant king and drive the minions of a foreign despot forever from the shores of the land of the free and the home of the brave.' "

For a moment Russell was prevented from reading more by the tumultuous shouts of the assembled freshmen.

"Don't be in a hurry, you verdant freshmen," said Russell. "What I've been reading is only the gush of the *Wrinsbuc Journal*. I imagine the faculty may take a little different view of the affair."

"They can't," said Jack eagerly. "The cannon belongs here, and now that it's where it belongs, they ought to be as glad as we are—I mean the whole college is."

"That's only a freshman opinion and isn't worth much. Clear out, you!" he added turning to the assembly. "I've important business to talk over with Hill and Hobart. Come! Make yourselves scarce!"

There were murmurs of dissent, but soon the visitors departed. As soon as they were gone Russell turned to the two boys and said:

"Now, you fellows, speak up. You're in this thing, I know you are. What do you intend to do?"

Ward and Jack glanced foolishly at each other, but as neither made any reply, Russell continued:

"I sha'n't give it away, but you're not the only ones concerned now. The whole college is mixed up in it, and we've just got to see it through, for I tell you the end hasn't come yet by any manner of means."

"What makes you think we had anything to do with it?" inquired Jack.

"You can't answer my question by asking another. It doesn't make any difference how I know. It's enough that I do know. I don't think any one else in Tegrus suspects though," he added confidentially, and in a lower tone of voice. "We've just got to plan now to hold on to the gun, for I think the faculty and the Crintop men will speak out pretty soon. Now, what do you intend to do?"

"I don't intend to let any sophomore in old Tegrus pump me," replied Jack. "If you were only half as well informed about what you don't know as you think you are

about what you do know, you'd be called to a chair in Tegrus to-morrow. No, sir! Not much! If I knew anything about the gun, I think I'd know enough not to let it out."

"Good-night, then, freshmen," said Russell good-naturedly, as he took his hat and speedily departed from the room.

CHAPTER XV

THE WATCH IN THE NIGHT

ON the following day the excitement among the Tegrus students did not diminish, although their ardor was somewhat dampened by the remarks of the president in the chapel. After acknowledging the fact that, as far as tradition and common report were concerned, the relic of the Revolution by right belonged to Tegrus, he said :

“But the manner in which it was restored is one of which I cannot approve. For many years this old cannon has had its resting-place upon the campus of our neighboring college. Many associations have clustered about it, and doubtless to the most of the Crintop students the question of the right of possession has never presented itself. Of course I do not know the exact manner in which it was transferred to our own campus, nor do I care to learn all the details ; but of this one thing you may well be assured, young gentlemen, and that is, that never yet did one wrong right another. If there was the desire in your hearts to possess the old relic, there were other ways by which the result might have been brought to pass. As it now stands, I have a communication from the Crintop faculty, in which they express the regret of their entire college at what has occurred and also express the hope that justice will be done and proper means employed to set the matter right. I need not assure you that justice will be done, and that Tegrus would rather suffer a wrong than inflict one. That does not mean that we shall meekly surrender our rights ; but that, although the matter now becomes one of college diplomacy, if I may be permitted to use the expression, it does mean that we shall not countenance any theft, even of

those things which we perhaps naturally regard as our own possessions. I very much fear that the misguided zeal of those students who, without waiting for the proper course of entering into negotiations with Crintop and a careful consideration of all the elements of the case, have been led into doing something of which I am sure the sentiment of the entire student body cannot approve, will react upon themselves."

The president concluded his remarks and the students filed out of the chapel, but it was evident that the excitement had not abated one whit. It was the subject of conversation whenever a few met together and as between the recitation hours there were many of these groups to be seen, it was quite evident that the old cannon was receiving its full share of attention. Even in the classrooms the subject was not forgotten, and as it was clear that not all of the professors shared the sentiments of the venerable president, the natural consequence was that the boys were not disposed to agree with his view of the matter.

The feelings of those freshmen who knew more than they felt at liberty to tell concerning the exciting event can well be imagined. Russell, whenever he met them, and somehow it seemed to them as if he were everywhere at the same time that day, gave them a meaning look which did not tend to put them at their ease. However, the day at length passed and Ward and Jack were alone in their room for a few minutes after they had returned from their boarding-place. Both were troubled more than either cared to express, and much of the glamour of the escapade had departed.

"I'll tell you what, Jack," said Ward breaking in on the awkward silence, "I never thought of the thing as the president put it. He called it a 'theft.'"

"It's no theft, is it, to take what already belongs to you? I'm not bothered by that."

"What are you afraid of then?"

"I don't know what the end's going to be. I don't believe there are half a dozen fellows in Tegrus who aren't glad the old gun is here. It's where it ought to be."

"What do you mean by the 'end'?"

"Oh, nothing. Only I'm half afraid of that sophomore Anceps. It isn't all talk on his part when he says he knows who stole—I mean who brought the old gun over here. There's no knowing what a soph will do. He's jealous of the class, I think. I wish I could tell just what was best to be done, but I can't."

"Let's go over and talk with Oliver and Drake about it."

"That's a good suggestion. Come on, we'll go right away."

The two boys speedily made their way to the Delta Beta house, but they were so unfortunate as to find only Oliver there. If Drake had been there, the result of the conversation might have been somewhat different, for he was a much more serious-minded young fellow than his classmate, and doubtless his words would have provided a different solution of the troublesome problem from that which Oliver offered.

When the two anxious freshmen entered the house they found Oliver sitting in the parlor, and at once approaching and acknowledging his salutation, Jack said: "Come up to your room, will you, Oliver? We want to talk to you about something important."

"What have you freshmen been up to now?" inquired the senior as he rose and led the way to his room. "You haven't had a 'warning' have you?"

"No; we're all right in our class work," replied Jack. "It's worse than that."

Perceiving that the boys were really troubled, Oliver became silent and as soon as all three were in his room he closed and bolted the door and then turning to his visitors, said: "Now speak your piece, freshmen. What is it on your mind?"

Thus bidden, Jack related the story of the entire affair. He told how the project had first entered his mind when "Petie" had referred to the cannon as virtually belonging to Tegrus. Then he gave a detailed description of the plan they had formed and how it had been carried out. The only thing he kept back was the names of the other freshmen who had joined them, simply declaring that all who had shared in it had been members of his own class.

Oliver listened attentively and without interruption till Jack had finished his story and then said slowly: "Then you were the guilty ones, were you? Well, old Tegrus has a fine lot of infants on her hands this year, I must say."

"We didn't think of it in the light in which the president seemed to regard it this morning," said Ward quickly, misunderstanding the attitude of Oliver.

"Very likely not," replied the senior dryly. "It frequently happens that the views of the president or the faculty do slightly differ from those of the entering class, and even from those of the upper classmen, for the matter of that. We had a fellow here last year named Cole. He was one of the most brilliant fellows that ever entered the college, but he was a happy-go-lucky sort of a chap, and it never seemed to enter his head that any one ever came to college to study. Well, he neglected his work and got into a number of scrapes, and finally, after several warnings, the president sent him home. But how do you suppose Cole took it? Why he just sat down and wrote his father a letter stating that he and the president never seemed to agree on anything. Their judgments never coincided, in fact, and as the president was settled here and Wrinsbuc had been for many years the home of his family, he thought that he could leave more easily than the president could, so he had decided for the sake of peace and for the good of the college to go and leave the president here."

"What did his father say to that?"

"I never knew all he said or thought, for Cole didn't

tell. But I do know that Mr. Cole was all cut up about it and took the disgrace very keenly. You know expulsion from college is a mighty serious affair."

"Do you think they'll expel us?" said Ward quickly.

"No," and Oliver laughed. "They won't expel you; at least they won't if they never find out who took the cannon, and even if they do find out I don't believe they'd do that. Such things leak out though, sometimes. I hope all of the fellows who are in it know enough to keep their own counsel."

"All of the class do," said Jack eagerly. "But I've a dim suspicion that the sophomore Anceps knows we were mixed up in the affair, though for the life of me I can't imagine how he found out anything about it."

"That's not so promising, if Anceps really does know; but I've an idea he's only guessing. Even if he does know, I'll look after him. Now the thing you've got to consider first of all is what's to be done."

"That's the very reason why we came over to talk with you," said Ward.

"My impression is that it won't be regarded as a very serious affair, if it is found out, and I have serious doubts about the faculty ever learning just who did it, or saying anything about it even then. It was a bold thing for freshmen to do. Nothing like it has ever happened before to be recorded in college reminiscences."

"But what shall we do?" persisted Ward, who was sadly troubled.

"Do? Why as long as you're in it, as you are, you've got to go on to the end. The college will stand by you to a man. That cannon belongs here, and ought to have been given up years ago. There's one thing you haven't thought of, though."

"What's that?" said Jack.

"Those Crintop chaps won't let the old gun rest in peace where it is; you may stake your boots on that."

"What'll they do?"

"What they'll do, and what they'll try to do, are two different things entirely. What they'll try to do is to get the 'Bullfrog' back again where they think he belongs."

"Do you think they'll come and take him?" inquired Jack eagerly.

"That's what they'll try to do. There's no doubt about that. Now, for the honor of old Tegrus, we've just got to keep the gun where it is. It's passed out of the hands of you freshmen alone now, and every fellow in college is concerned in it. The gun's got to be fastened so securely that it simply can't be taken away. When the pedestal's made, that can be fixed; but just at present, before that can be done, the greatest danger is that they'll come over and get him."

"They'll be likely to do that pretty soon too, won't they?" inquired Ward.

"Correct, freshman. My opinion is that somebody will be over here to-night."

"But the president said in chapel this morning that the Crintop faculty had written about it, and that now it was a matter of college diplomacy."

"That's his opinion; but I've an idea that the Crintop fellows won't wait for any 'diplomacy.' They'll think the gun belongs to them, and the only thing for them to do is to come over here after it."

"They outnumber us four or five to one," said Jack.

"Oh, they won't send the whole college over here in sleighs on a winter night. That wasn't the way you did, was it? No, sir; they'll get up a party, in my opinion, and come over here perhaps to-night, and try to do just what you did over there."

"We can prevent that," replied Jack with a decided nod of his head.

"There's only one way in which it can be done. Somebody'll have to keep watch to-night. My judgment is anyway that the cannon had best be hidden away till after the

excitement dies out, and then it can be looked after all right. If it can be kept till the summer vacation, for example, there'll be no difficulty then in fixing it up. But to-night's the great time."

"We'll fix that then," said Jack excitedly. "Bart—I mean the fellows who went with us will agree to stay on guard, I know. We can cut the night up into six watches, and that won't be very long for each fellow."

"No, that's true; but where will you station them?" said the senior. "It's cold, and you can't leave them out on the campus. They'd freeze."

"They won't have to be on the campus," said Jack. "They can come up in our room. We sha'n't have to keep guard only from eleven until five. They won't do anything unless it's in that time. Let's see, that'll be six hours, just one hour for each fellow. We'll fix that all right, Oliver. Suppose we discover the Crintop chaps trying to take the gun away, what shall we do?"

"Have some horns with you, and call out the college. Every fellow 'll heed the warning and turn out. But you'd better get a couple of chains and fasten the gun to the trees some time this evening. That'll be something of a protection, anyway."

The boys at once departed, Jack being all eagerness now, and even Ward's scruples were somewhat quieted by the words of the senior, whom he regarded with so much respect. It was a busy evening for Jack, who took upon himself the supervision of the affair. The boys who had gone to Crintop with him readily consented to take their turns in keeping watch. Jack purchased two heavy chains with padlocks and late in the evening securely fastened the cannon to two of the adjoining trees.

About half-past ten o'clock the boys assembled in the room of Ward and Jack, and after arranging for the hour in which each was to take his stand by the window, prepared to pass the night there.

Ward's time was to be from twelve o'clock to one, and Jack's from one to two, as these were thought to be the critical hours. Each boy was to summon his successor and then join his sleeping comrades.

Ward was called when his hour arrived but no one was seen on the campus. At one o'clock he summoned Jack, who was sleeping soundly. It required several severe shakings to rouse the dormant freshman, but at last he was awake and took his seat by the window, and Ward threw himself heavily upon the bed.

The night was clear and starlit. The campus was covered with snow, and the view across it was not obstructed except by the leafless silent trees. The old cannon could be distinctly seen, but it was resting in its place with a calmness Jack was far from sharing.

For a time Jack steadily observed the moonlight scene before him. Monotonously silent, at last the trees seemed to nod together and assume fantastic shapes in the moonlight. Jack firmly declared that he had not closed his eyes, but suddenly standing erect he peered out again upon the campus.

Startled by what he saw, or rather by what he did not see, he rubbed his eyes in amazement and again looked out. There was no disguising the consternation of the lad now, for the old cannon was not anywhere to be seen.

CHAPTER XVI

RESTORATION

JACK speedily summoned his sleeping companions, and the consternation of the recreant watchman was not relieved by the remarks of his classmates when they discovered the loss. Without delaying for any extended remarks, however, they all drew on their overcoats, and grasping their hats, ran swiftly out of the building and across the campus to the place where the cannon had rested.

As the spot had been visited by so many of the Tegrus boys on the preceding day, it was impossible to discover anything by the footprints in the snow. One thing was apparent, and that was that the old relic had disappeared. Even the slight wooden framework upon which it had been placed was also gone, and the only tokens of the recent presence of the "Frog" were the two chains which were still fast to the trees where Jack had locked them.

The padlocks were both broken, however, and the methods employed by those who had taken the cannon were at once apparent. The "thieves," for so Jack and Ward somehow at once regarded those who had taken the gun, had not even been compelled to go through the tedious process of using a hammer and chisel, but had broken, perhaps by a single blow, the locks which had been altogether too frail for a protection, and doubtless the nocturnal visitors had not been obliged to remain upon the Tegrus campus but a few minutes. All of this we may be sure did not tend to soothe the feelings of the vanquished freshmen, and Jack's chagrin was not the least of the sources of his anger.

"The old thing's gone," said Bartol dejectedly at last.

"There's nothing more for us to do. We might as well go back to our rooms and get some sleep."

"Perhaps it's only been hidden somewhere," suggested Sweet, who now was as deeply interested as any of his classmates in the fate of the venerable croaker.

For a moment the suggestion afforded a slight relief to Jack's wounded feelings; but no one appeared to accept the statement as in any way probable, and the downcast freshmen, after a brief search among the college buildings, soon returned to Ward's room in Hall.

"I'm the one you ought to blame, fellows," said Jack when they were all seated. "If I had kept my eyes open as I ought to have done this thing couldn't have happened."

Whatever the feeling in their hearts might have been, not one of the boys added anything to Jack's mortification. His punishment was so evidently hard to bear that perhaps it was considered sufficient of itself, and besides there were weighty matters which must be considered at once.

"There's no doubt the Crintop fellows are the ones who have taken the gun," said Ward. "They've done the trick well, for it was a bold thing to do, so soon after we had brought the 'Frog' over here and would naturally be on our guard."

"No, there's no doubt as to the fellows who took it," said Sweet. "Now the thing for us to consider is whether we'll let the college know the part we took in it and throw it off on them, or whether we'll just keep still about it."

"We'll keep quiet," said Ward decidedly. "We haven't said anything about it yet, and there's no reason why we should now. Besides, I don't think Tegrus will need to have us inform her what's become of the gun. Every man will know right away that it's gone back to Crintop. We'd better keep still and it won't be long before we'll know who's got it. Crintop isn't an institution that keeps its light under a bushel."

"No, they aren't very bashful about calling out from the housetops everything they do. They seem to think the whole world is interested in their performances," said Bartol, somewhat bitterly.

"Well, a good part of the world will be interested in this performance," said Jack gloomily. "I don't blame Crintop or any other college for keeping people informed about their doings. It's not having anything worth reporting that troubles me. What a light this affair is going to put Tegrus in! We'd better not have touched it in the first place than have it turn out like this."

It was evident that others besides Jack Hobart entertained similar opinions, and an air of gloom settled over the entire company. For a moment no one spoke, and then Ward, whose quiet bearing was not without its influence, said:

"Oh, well, fellows, the end is not yet. It's to be continued in our next, as the stories say. Suppose the Crintop fellows have stolen the gun" (Ward used the word "stolen" very glibly now), "why, that doesn't mean that they will be allowed to keep it forever, does it? Jack isn't to blame, and anyway I'm not sure that there won't be a good deal more excitement and fun to be had, as it is, than there could have been if the old gun had been left here in peace and quiet. If Crintop has the cannon, why, that will mean that we'll have to try and get it back again, that's all."

Ward's words served to revive to a degree the drooping spirits of his classmates, who soon departed for their rooms, first agreeing to say nothing, at least to the college at large, about what had occurred that night.

On the following morning, when the bell in the Tegrus chapel sent forth its summons for the students to assemble, great was the astonishment and greater still the anger and excitement when the disappearance of the cannon was discovered. The angry boys assembled about the place and critically examined the broken locks and hanging chains.

There appeared to be no difference of opinion as to what had become of the gun, and the universal verdict was that Crintop had stolen a march upon Tegrus and had succeeded in carrying away the much-coveted prize.

Jack's cheeks flushed as he heard one of the older students declare: "It was a regular freshman trick. It was a brainless performance anyway. Whoever had taken the cannon in the first place ought to have seen to it that it was concealed, or at least guarded, until all danger of its being seized again had passed."

As Jack looked up, striving vainly to appear unconcerned as to the spoken words, he caught the glance of Anceps, who was again regarding him intently. The freshman moved uneasily in the crowd and tried to conceal himself, but all in vain. Wherever he went there the sophomore seemed to be also.

Poor Jack! For the first time in his brief life he was realizing the fickle judgment of the crowd. Always eager to throw up their hats for the man who succeeds, and just as ready to decry him when his attempts fail. However, Jack Hobart was to learn also that the true test of strength is to be found in not being unduly elated by the flattering shouts of approval, nor too much cast down when the approval is withdrawn. There is such a thing as being strong enough to bear and endure both extremes, but it comes only from long experience and perhaps through many heartaches. Happy is the man who early learns that the highest tests of success are not to be found in the approval of those about us, but in the approving voice within us. We are all slow to learn, however justly and rightly we may desire the outer elements of life to favor us, that happiness and success are never to be obtained from our surroundings, but always from within.

The mind has its own peace, and can make
A heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.

Doubtless, although Jack Hobart did not realize it on that winter morning, when as a freshman in old Tegrus he heard the condemning voices and words of the students in the assemblage about the place where the old cannon had been, that much of his distress arose not from the disapproval of his companions but from the disapproving voice of his own conscience. Talk as boldly as Jack might, he had still been somewhat troubled about the methods employed in restoring the cannon to its proper place on the Tegrus campus.

His attention and that of the entire assembly was immediately withdrawn by the shout of some one who was seen coming swiftly up the driveway in a sleigh. As he came nearer Jack perceived that it was a senior named Waters. Again calling to the assembly as he approached, Waters leaped lightly out of the sleigh, tossed the reins to the driver, who at once started toward the street, and then called out :

"I know all about it, fellows ; I've just come from Crintop. I was over there spending the night, and this morning I found out all about it."

Instantly the students gathered about him, and with an air of increased importance the senior resumed.

"Yes, the old cannon is there on the Crintop campus. They came over here and got it last night."

A shout of anger greeted the words. "We'll get it again ! Let's go over now and take it ! It belongs to Tegrus, and we'll have our own ! Three cheers for Tegrus ! Three groans for Crintop !" were among the expressions of the angry and excited students.

"You can save your breath, fellows," resumed Waters, when once more he could make himself heard. "You can't do anything more."

"Why not ? Why not ? We'll show them whether we can do anything or not."

"Well, you can't, and that's all there is to it. You can't,

for the simple reason that there are a dozen masons at work there this morning. They're putting up a solid stone pier, and are just going to plant the old gun right in it so that an earthquake couldn't lift it."

The cheers and jeers were greatly modified by the senior's statement, but as the chapel bell had ceased to ring they suddenly all made a start for the interior and came plunging up the aisles in such confusion that the professor who was to conduct the service that morning was compelled to wait several minutes before he could proceed.

At last a form of quiet was restored, but it is doubtful whether even the most mature and dignified of the seniors had his thoughts that morning where they ought to have been. An air of excitement and unrest appeared everywhere about the college, even some of the professors themselves seeming to share in it.

However, the day passed, and although there was some talk of calling a mass meeting of the students and entering a formal protest against Crintop being permitted to retain what was considered as a Tegrus possession, the meeting was not held, and the excitement seemed to spend itself in idle talk and threats.

To Oliver, Ward and Jack confided the experience of the preceding night, assured that there could be no harm done now as it was positively known where the cannon was. Drake was also then in Oliver's room in the Delta Beta house, and to the surprise of the younger boys he took a very decided stand against the entire performance.

"I'm not blaming you freshmen unduly," he said, "but I did think you were not ones to get the whole college into such a scrape."

"But the cannon belongs to us," protested Jack.

"You have only heard one side of the story. Whether it does or not was a matter for others to consider, not for freshmen. Such things are demoralizing. They take the attention of the fellows away from what ought to be first.

No, I'm not preaching," he hastily added, interrupting Oliver, who was about to speak; "but for one, I don't want to let anything come in ahead of my work. You can call me your grandfather, and say I'm old-fashioned, and all that, but what I am after is the training a college course gives. My father says, and he's just a straight, plain business man, that the training he got in college was what taught him how to think, and all that sort of thing, and is the best part of the capital he's got to-day. So you see I haven't much patience with the nonsensical part of college life, which so many make so much of. It's just business to me, and I'm going to get all I can out of it.

"You lack imagination, my friend," said Oliver lightly. "You ignore the lighter part. 'Useless each without the other,' you know."

"I may lack imagination, as you call it, though I don't ignore the lighter things; but I want them called lighter, not the important ones. And as I say, I'm sorry that these freshmen have got drawn into it."

"You're a mighty good fellow, Drake, and I'll take stock in you every time," said Oliver impressively, rising as he spoke. "I say, freshmen, did you know that Drake goes down here on the river along the docks and helps do mission work every Sunday afternoon? And he isn't going to be a preacher either. That's the part that bothers me. If he was going to be a preacher, I could understand it better."

"You'd understand it better if you would only come down once and see for yourself what it is. I'm glad you spoke of it, though, for I've been thinking of inviting these freshmen to go with me some day. Will you go?"

"I will that," said Ward, not realizing at the time what the promised visit was to mean to him.

Gradually the feeling in Tegrus concerning the cannon became more quiet. It was known that nothing could be done by the students, at least very soon, for the solid mason work on the Crintop campus was a sufficient reminder of

that fact. Various plans for securing the old relic in vacation time were discussed, but none of them were deemed feasible, and the "diplomacy" of the good old president was looked upon as only a form. No one thought of the cannon as ever likely to be restored to the Tegrus campus now.

It was therefore with the greater surprise that Ward and Jack one morning about a week after the exciting events here recorded, were hailed by Russell. Coming close to them he whispered in their ears something about the "Bullfrog" that caused both boys to look up in surprise and eagerly invite him to come up to their room at once.

CHAPTER XVII

A DAY IN THE MISSION

WHEN the three boys were seated in the room, Russell said, "It's just exactly as I'm telling you, freshmen. The old gun will never make any more trouble."

"Why not? What do you mean? We'll have it back here before you know it, and fixed so that no Crintop man will ever be able to budge it again," said Jack.

Russell smiled and said, "You'll never be able to find the fragments, unless you run around the Crintop campus with a telescope in one hand and a microscope in the other."

"A fellow would have to be cross-eyed to do that," said Jack. "I wish you'd speak right out, Anceps, if you've got anything to say."

"Well, then, the plain, straight English is that the old gun has been smashed into a thousand pieces. I can't give you the exact number, but a thousand will do as well as any other. There are more than any man is likely to count, anyway."

"Smashed?" said Ward and Jack together.

"Yes, smashed. That's what I said, wasn't it? Don't you understand the English language? Smashed, burst, rent asunder, broken into bits, torn apart, dissolved into its original elements, evaporated, disappeared. Take your choice of any of these expressions if you don't like 'smashed.' The idea is the same, and I don't care much which you select, the fate of the old gun is about the same in any case."

"How did it happen?" inquired Ward more quietly, as

he perceived, that Russell was only striving to increase their curiosity.

“Well, freshmen stole the gun in the first place—I don’t need to tell you that. No, I sha’n’t tell you how I found out,” he hastily added, as he noticed that the boys were about to interrupt him with a question. “But the freshmen couldn’t keep it here where it belonged. That’s what they gained from not following the advice of those who knew more about such things than they did. But the Crintop fellows took it back again. They thought they’d got it all fixed when they set the old ‘Frog’ in solid mason work, and it did look so, for a fact. But some of your betters went over there last night and looked into the matter very carefully. In fact they looked into the muzzle of the old gun itself, and what they saw suggested an idea to their fertile brains, for the sophomore class has some brains, let me tell you, whether the freshmen have or not. Well, the result of it all was that the old fellow was filled plumb full of powder, and then the muzzle was plugged up. There weren’t any Crintop fellows on guard, for they felt so sure that the cannon couldn’t be moved that they left it all alone. We—that is, I mean they—lighted a fuse and then withdrew from the scene of war to await events. We—they, I mean—didn’t have to wait very long, for in about two minutes the old ‘Frog’ croaked in a way that made the Crintop windows rattle, let me tell you.

“It was about six seconds afterward, as nearly as I could reckon it, when it seemed as if all the Crintop men came pouring out of the dormitories like a swarm of bees out of a hive, or perhaps more correctly a lot of hornets out of a nest. As soon as we—I mean they, as I said—saw that the campus was covered with students, we just went right in among them as cool as you please. Those fellows who were mixed up in the affair this time had a little nerve, and didn’t have to run around and dodge everybody they met. Well, we—they, I mean—went right up in the crowd till

we were in front of the 'Bullfrog,' or where he had been, for there wasn't much left of him now. When the gun went off it had torn the solid mason work apart, and the cannon itself was broken into a thousand pieces. I've got one of the pieces myself," and as he spoke, Russell drew from his pocket a small piece of rusty iron which he held forth for the inspection of his hearers.

Ward took the memento, and after carefully examining it, said slowly: "Then the old cannon is smashed all to pieces, is it?"

"Yes," replied Russell, with exultation. "Crintop never will brag again that they got the better of old Tegrus."

"What did they do when they found the cannon had burst?" said Jack.

"Do? There wasn't anything they could do. They were all stirred up though, and were much in that condition in which a hen is said to be when some one has poured water on her back. They'll never brag over the 'Frog' again," he added exultingly. "If we can't have it, there's some consolation in the fact that they can't have it either."

"I don't look at it in that way," said Ward quietly; "I think you've made a big mistake. We ought to have had the cannon here, there's no doubt about that; but if we couldn't it was a mean trick to burst it. It might a good deal better have been left on the Crintop campus than nowhere at all. You've simply spoiled the whole thing now, Anceps, and no one will ever have the old relic."

"That's right, Ward," added Jack hastily. "If it was a freshman trick to steal it, it was a regular sophomore trick to smash it. I don't believe there's a fellow in college who will back you up, Anceps."

"You fellows won't say anything about it, will you?" said Russell quickly, evidently somewhat abashed by the unexpected words of the freshmen.

"No, of course we won't. But don't tell anybody else about it," replied Jack.

Ward's prophecy proved to be correct. Eager as all the Tegrus boys had been to have the cannon on their own campus, where they fondly believed it to belong, the sentiment of the entire college was against the deed which had forever destroyed the venerable relic.

For a few days it continued to be a topic of conversation and a subject of much interest, and then it gradually disappeared. Other matters took its place, and while the exciting episode remained as one of the stirring events of the college year, it soon was pushed back into its proper place in history.

Ward and Jack remembered their promise to Russell, and did not disclose their knowledge. They did, however, feel called upon to explain to Oliver and Drake that they themselves were in no way concerned with it, a task which they found somewhat difficult, as the seniors were still disposed to look upon the whole affair as the outcome of a "freshman trick." Indeed the impression seemed to prevail throughout the college that the freshman class could explain it all if they had felt so disposed, an impression which greatly angered both Ward and Jack; but they were powerless to throw any light on the mystery, and so the affair rested, although it led later to results of which no one had dreamed.

On the following Sunday afternoon Ward and Jack accompanied Drake to the place where the mission station was. It was on the borders of the city, near the bank of the river. An old and unused warehouse had been fitted up with chairs, a stove stood in one corner of the room, a small organ was on the improvised platform, and one or two charts and maps were hanging on the walls. These walls were broken and somewhat discolored, and the appearance of the place was not in any way inviting.

It was the first time, however, that our boys had ever been in such surroundings, and their curiosity for a time kept other thoughts from their minds. Drake explained

that he was to be both janitor and leader that day, as the regular leader was ill. He also explained that some of the young ladies from one of the city churches, a few men, and several of the college boys were accustomed to be present and lend such aid as lay within their power.

There was no fire kindled in the stove when the trio entered the room, but wood and kindlings were there, and in a few moments the boys had a fire started. At first it filled the room with smoke and they were compelled to raise the windows. The day was cold, and as the boys stood there shivering and chilled, waiting for the fire to "draw," the prospect of an interesting afternoon did not appear to be very promising.

However, after a time the smoke subsided, the draught appeared to be working better, and closing the windows they waited for the audience to appear.

"Sha'n't we be distributing these hymn books?" said Jack to Drake. "We might as well be doing something as standing here trying to keep the stove warm."

"No," replied Drake, "I'll wait till some of the boys come in and ask them to do it. You see it's the first time I ever took charge of the meeting and I confess I'm a trifle anxious. There are some pretty tough boys here."

"But they won't do anything to bother you, will they," said Ward quickly, "when you just come down here to do what you can for them? They'll appreciate it, I'm sure."

"That's what a good many think," replied Drake with a smile. "But that doesn't appear to be the way of the world, does it? Haven't I read somewhere, sometime, in some book, that the prophets were stoned and those who were sent to help the people were despised? It seems to me I have read something like that. Then too, there's an account given in the same book of some One who was nailed to a cross by the very people whom he came to help. No, it doesn't seem to be the way in which most of the men

who have tried, no matter how honestly, to help others have been treated."

"If you're afraid of trouble, what do you bother with them for?" said Jack impulsively. "I wouldn't."

"Yes, you would, Jack, after you've seen what I've seen here," said Drake gently. "You'd do more than I, if I'm not greatly mistaken. Here come some of the girls," he added, as a trio of young ladies entered the room.

The bright faces and glowing cheeks of the new-comers, and the cordial manner in which they greeted Drake, "Mr. Drake," they all called him, interested Ward and Jack at once, and after their companion had introduced them, Ward stood for several minutes talking to Miss Cole, a young lady not much above his own age.

"This is the first time you've been here, isn't it, Mr. Hill?" inquired Miss Cole.

"Yes," replied Ward. "I don't know what to do now that I've come."

"You'll soon find out. Mr. Drake knows how to deal with boys. Are you a sophomore, Mr. Hill?"

"No, I'm a freshman," replied Ward, blushing in spite of his efforts.

Somehow he felt very young, and also felt that Miss Cole shared in the feeling. Glancing across the room he saw Jack conversing with the other two young ladies who were present, and his manifest assurance had only the effect of increasing Ward's own feeling of youthfulness.

At this time, however, a number of boys entered the room and slid into the nearest chairs. They were roughly clad and their faces and manners alike betokened their familiarity with the street life in old Wrinsbuc.

"Excuse me, Mr. Hill," remarked Miss Cole as the boys entered, "I must speak to these boys. Two of them are my boys, you see," she added with a smile as she turned to the place where the hoodlums were seated.

Now others were coming into the room, some noisy, and

some evidently inclined to make a disturbance. The room soon was filled and as the other teachers had now arrived, Miss Cole arose from her seat, and approaching the organ near which Ward was standing, drew off her gloves, and as Ward lifted the cover of the organ for her, she said :

“Thank you, Mr. Hill. You see I’m the unfortunate, or fortunate one, I don’t know which, to-day, to preside here. I hope you’ll help us in the singing. You certainly will think we need assistance as soon as you hear them begin.”

Drake now stepped upon the platform and at a word the room took on the form, at least, of order. Then Drake made a brief prayer. It was a new light in which the senior appeared and Ward Hill was moved even more than he was aware at the time. He respected Drake so thoroughly, and his manly, straightforward way of doing things had, ever since he had met him, made Ward feel as if he were a true man ; but it was the first time in which he had ever seen him engage in such work as he was then doing.

In a few cheery words Drake explained that the leader was ill and so could not be present that day. He appealed to them all to do their best to show that they had some regard for him and his work, and then said : “We’ll all sing, ‘Am I a soldier of the cross.’ It’s on page seventy-one.”

The boys all began to turn the leaves of the hymn books which had been previously distributed by some of their own companions. Miss Cole played a few chords upon the organ, and then the assembly began to sing.

It was a strange sound which went up, however, and Ward observed a smile of amusement on Jack’s demure face. He himself felt somewhat inclined to join in the smile more than in the singing, but just then he observed two boys near the window on one side of the room. They were not singing, and as they nudged each other Ward began to suspect they were plotting some mischief.

His surmise proved to be correct when one of them placing his hand on his mouth let out two or three of the most ear-splitting "caterwauls" that Ward had ever heard. Indeed, they almost startled him ; but his sympathy for Drake at once absorbed his attention, for the most of those present were not singing now, and a titter ran through the room at the unearthly screeches which the boy had emitted.

Ward soon found his sympathy was not needed by the senior, for Drake, still holding the book in one hand and singing loudly, walked down the aisle, stopped in front of the row in which the mischief-maker was seated, reached over and grasped him securely by the collar, and lifting him out of his seat marched with him to the door, cast him out, then closed the door, and returned to his place on the platform, singing lustily, "Am I a soldier of the cross," all the time.

To Ward's intense surprise the effect upon the room was most excellent. All the boys were singing now, although they were looking more at Drake than at their books. But the glance was one of respect.

CHAPTER XVIII

WARD'S PROMISE

ANOTHER side of the senior's character was soon revealed to Ward and Jack who, while they had regarded their companion with unbounded respect, had never thought of him in the light in which they now saw him. In an earnest talk he spoke to the assembly of his own experiences and desires, never once "talking down to them," as Jack said, and drawing many of his stories and illustrations from the football field.

The incidents appealed very strongly to the audience, for the "muckers," as Tegrus students termed the street boys of Wrinsbuc, were fully alive to all the details of the game, and under the fence or over it at unguarded moments were accustomed to make their way upon the college field in enthusiastic numbers whenever the spectators and guardians of the enclosure had their attention attracted to some exciting episode in the game. Such moments could be easily found, for the increased volume of cheering never failed to betray the fact that the fences would be left unguarded.

The heroes of the field were also heroes to the Wrinsbuc "muckers," and while they never failed to cheer the visiting teams at the expense of the home eleven, still in their hearts they cherished a strong regard for the doughty champions of old Tegrus, and doubtless the reputation of Drake as a football player helped to increase the respect with which his peculiar audience regarded him in the mission room on a Sunday afternoon. This feeling of respect was also increased that day by the prompt action of the senior in quelling the first appearance of disorder, and the rapid

manner in which he had marched the offending boy to the door had produced an impression the exact opposite of that which Ward and Jack had expected to see.

There was no disorder throughout the remainder of the service, and when, at its close, Ward walked by the side of Miss Cole along the narrow brick-paved street he acknowledged that he had been greatly impressed by the work which had been done in the afternoon. His companion explained that the plan of work had varied that afternoon from the usual programme. "Mr. Drake," as she explained, "having felt somewhat uneasy about permitting the class-work to be done for fear that if he should withdraw his attention from the room others besides the boy with the cat calls might be inclined to take advantage of the inexperience of the leader."

For a long time Ward and Jack talked over the experience that evening in their room, and both resolved that it would not be their last experience in the Sunday afternoon service.

"I'll tell you what, Jack," said Ward enthusiastically, "Drake is a great fellow. I always liked him, but I never thought of him as one who would go into such a work as that was this afternoon. Why, the way he talked to those 'muckers' just stirred me as nothing has done since I've been in old Tegrus. He talked just as if he meant every word he said."

"So he did," replied Jack, "and he knows how to handle these fellows too. The way he marched that chap down the aisle as solemn as a judge, and never stopping his singing all the while either, would make a snow statue smile. It even moved me."

"It was great," replied Ward, smiling at the recollection. "But Miss Cole said it was the very best thing he could have done, especially when he didn't appear to be angry, just taking it all as a part of the afternoon service."

"Yes, I noticed that Miss Cole seemed to approve it all

most heartily," said Jack demurely. "I'm wondering, Ward, if she doesn't have a pretty good influence over the fellows down there."

"I should think she would," responded Ward quickly. "She is very much interested and certainly has a very interesting way. It's a great thing for a girl like her to be willing to go down there every Sunday afternoon and do what she can for those fellows."

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of her influence on the 'muckers.'"

"On whom, then? There wasn't any one else there."

"Oh, yes there was."

"There was? I didn't see any others. Who was there?"

"Freshmen."

"Oh," and Ward laughed heartily. "You think she's interesting to the freshmen too, do you? Well, she is. I think any fellow ought to be better for knowing such a girl as that. She somehow seems to appeal to the best there is in him."

"No doubt," was all the reply that Jack made, as he rose and began to prepare for bed.

The subject of the mission was not alluded to for several days, but on Thursday evening of that same week there was a reception at the Delta Beta house, and the hearts of both our freshmen were somewhat uneasy, as it was to be their first appearance at anything of the kind since they had entered Tegrus. Jack, it was true, was more accustomed to the manners and customs of city life, and his nervousness was very different from that of Ward, who had known only the life in the little village where his home was.

These "affairs" were quite pretentious, and as several of the wives of the professors lent the aid of their presence and presided over the "functions," they were regarded as somewhat important breaks in the monotony of the college life in the long and dreary winter term. Each of the more prominent of the Greek letter fraternities was accustomed

to have several during the year, and the Delta Beta house was the first to be thrown open.

As the guests began to arrive and the assembly in the brilliantly lighted rooms began to increase in number, Ward felt more and more conscious of his own inexperience. It was true some of the upper classmen were exceedingly kind to him, and took special care to present him to their own sisters who had come out from the near-by cities to grace the occasion with their presence. But all through the evening there was an undefined feeling in his heart that he was very young, and that all who were present were aware of that fact, and perhaps commenting upon it after they had met him and had passed on to talk with others.

He was standing for a moment in the hall, and for the time was looking over the assembly, impressed even more than he was aware by the brilliancy of the occasion and the ease with which his companions were conducting themselves. Off in the crowd he obtained a glimpse of his roommate, who was the center of a little group of young people, and all apparently were laughing at something Jack was saying. Ward almost envied his friend the ease and self-possession he evidently felt, and for a moment he thought he was almost out of place in such a scene.

His meditations were suddenly interrupted by the voice of Oliver. The senior touched him upon the shoulder, and even before he could turn Ward heard him say: "I want to present our prize freshman to you, Miss Cole. This is the freshman who took one of the entrance prizes you know."

"I have already had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Hill," interrupted Miss Cole, as she greeted Ward cordially.

"I didn't know you had met," said Oliver. "Hill, have you been calling upon the Wrinsbuc young ladies without the knowledge and consent of the seniors?"

"Mr. Hill and I met last Sunday afternoon at the mission. He and his chum came down to assist Mr. Drake. It was an example some of his seniors might do well to follow."

"Perhaps you're right, Miss Cole," replied Oliver with a smile. "If I had known more about the mission and who were there, perhaps I might have gone."

At that moment some one came for the senior, and excusing himself for a time he departed, leaving his companion with Ward. Ward had been silent up to this time, and that undefined feeling that he was "very young" and not altogether at home, had been increased by the ease with which Oliver carried on the conversation and moved about.

"I didn't know that you were a Delta Beta," began Miss Cole. "I'm sure I'm glad you are, and I might offer my congratulations. Oh, I fancy I'm a little prejudiced," she added with a laugh as Ward was about to speak. "You see, my brother, who graduated from Tegrus six years ago, was a Delt, and so was my father, and as they are the best men in the world, it's only natural that I should take an especial interest and pride in their fraternity."

"I am glad you almost belong there yourself."

"Oh, I do, I assure you. I wear their badges, or at least I did when I was younger, and my brother was at home."

"I wish you would wear one now," said Ward quickly. "I'd be very glad to loan you mine."

Miss Cole laughed and consented, and as Ward took his pin from his vest and handed it to her, Oliver returned.

"Upon my word, freshman," he said as he perceived the act, "you are doing well for a beginner."

Ward thought the senior was not over-pleased, but he made no reply, for the feeling of extreme youthfulness had once more returned with the approach of the captain of the football team. However, he laughed by way of a reply, and tried to appear far more at ease than he really felt.

"I want to talk to Mr. Hill a few minutes," said Miss Cole quickly. "You can come back in a quarter of an hour, Mr. Oliver."

"Banished, supplanted, driven into a cold, cold world," said Oliver in mock humility, as he turned away.

"Now, Mr. Hill," began Miss Cole, "I want you to make me a promise."

"What is it?"

"But I want you to say that you will make the promise before I tell you."

"How can I do that?"

"Why, very easily, I'm sure. All you have to do is to say 'yes.'"

"'Yes,' then I'll say, since you ask it."

"Thank you. I want you to promise that you'll come down to the mission every Sunday afternoon and help us."

"That's not such a very difficult promise to make."

Ward was beginning to feel more at his ease, and the seriousness of the manner of Miss Cole was not without an effect upon him. A freshman was not such an entirely valueless creature after all, if he might judge from the manner of the young lady before him.

"But that isn't all. I want you to take a class," she added.

"Take a class? I never did such a thing in my life. I don't think I could."

"But you are a church-member, are you not?"

"Yes."

"Then you ought to be at work," said Miss Cole decidedly. "I'm more interested than I can explain to you in that little mission. I told you my father was a Delt. He was, but I didn't tell you that he's been dead two years. He was the one who began the work there, and with the help of some of the girls and the ladies and the college boys it did well. But lately it's been harder. The workers aren't there, and it's more and more difficult every week. You saw what happened last Sunday afternoon, and Mr. Drake is a good leader too. What we need is the presence of some more of the college boys. If you could only see the difference the work makes in the homes of some of those poor creatures in that part of the city! Why, I could tell

you of — but I know you'll come. You surely will, will you not, Mr. Hill?"

Ward, as he said, had never had any experience in such work, and indeed he did not regard himself as fitted for the task. But the eager manner of the girl before him and her eyes filled with tears were more than he could endure, and without a thought of his fitness or unfitness he consented and gave the desired promise.

"Confab over?" said Oliver lightly as he approached. "May I enter and share with my freshman friend now?"

Ward's feeling of extreme youthfulness was there once more, and he was turning away when Oliver said: "Hold on a minute, Hill. Is there a freshman named Smith?"

"Yes. What about him?"

"Oh, I just heard that the sophomores had been giving him a little attention. A lot of them took him and four others last night and put them through some great performances. They made him smile and smile for them, till they say his face will never get back into its natural shape again. Then they made all five of them mount broomsticks and run a race out on College Avenue. Then they took them down in front of the 'Fem. Sem.,' and put them through their performances there."

Ward tried to laugh, but he made no reply, and soon withdrew feeling that to be a freshman was still a most difficult experience. Young, inexperienced, and put upon by all the college, his lot was certainly not a happy one.

Something of his feeling was manifested in his words that night after he and Jack had returned to their room. Jack had had a "great time" that evening, as he expressed it, and was in no mood to share Ward's despondent feelings.

"Nonsense! It's far and away the best class in college. They're all jealous of it, that's the trouble," he declared.

"Perhaps so," said Ward dubiously.

"There's no 'perhaps' about it. I know it's so, and so do you."

"I know it's got one good fellow in it, anyway," replied Ward cordially. "I don't know what I'd do without you, Jack."

"That's something like it," said Jack. "You're beginning to show an appreciation of my missionary zeal at last, I see."

"I'm going to be a missionary myself," said Ward slowly.

"That's right too. Going to India, or to the sophomore class?"

"Worse than that."

"Worse than that? What do you mean?" Jack turned quickly as he spoke and looked sharply at his companion. His voice had betrayed his seriousness, and Jack was quick to feel the change. His manner too changed as he said, "What are you going to do, Ward?"

"I've promised to go down to the mission Sunday afternoons and teach a class."

Jack's surprise apparently overcame him for the moment. He gazed blankly at his room-mate, and then burst into a hearty laugh. He made no other reply, however, but long after the lights were out, Ward heard him laugh aloud in his bedroom. His own cheeks flushed, and he was glad that Jack could not see him, but he was none the less puzzled over the apparently unseemly mirth of his chum.

CHAPTER XIX

JIMMY MCGUIRE'S MESSAGE

THE experiences which Ward Hill had in his first work in the mission school were all entirely different from any which had ever come to him before. He even found it difficult at times to realize that he was actually one of the workers there.

As he himself expressed it, he had never had any "gush" about such matters, and in fact had never felt especially drawn to labors of that kind; but in a straightforward and manly way he took up the task, as he now did all his work, with a dogged persistence that promised well for faithful work, although the results which were likely to be accomplished might not be large.

His difficulties were not decreased when he discovered that Jimmy McGuire, the lad who had created the disturbance when Drake had led the meeting, was to be in his class. As he glanced keenly at him he could find little that was promising in his coarse face, and his fears were not allayed when he overheard his scholar express in a very audible whisper his opinion of "de freshmans."

Still Ward held himself steadily to his task, and as week followed week, he began to think he was creating some impression upon the rough and ill-mannered boys whom he tried to teach. At times he invited them to his room in Hall and took them through the college museum and library, trying his best to interest them and explain the more startling specimens of the collection. Sometimes he would be encouraged by their responses and apparent interest in what he was trying to do for them, and then again he would return after the session feeling as if his labors were

wasted and that no good could ever come from all his efforts.

In one way there was certainly a very marked result, and that was upon Ward himself. All through his young life he had been the one to receive and not to give. Surrounded as he had been in his boyhood by the best of influences, he had not realized his weakness until he had been thrust into the life of the Weston school. His lesson in the first year there had been a severe one, and he had suffered keenly not only on account of the loss which had come to him, but also on account of the deep grief he had brought to the hearts of his parents.

In his second year he had in a measure redeemed himself, and although he was not able to recover entirely the ground he had previously lost, still he had done well. His thoughts all through that experience had been mostly of himself, and for the first time in that mission school in Wrinsbuc he had found that life does not consist alone of that which one can receive.

Of course the effect of his work was now largely unperceived, and yet in a dim way it was producing a result upon Ward's own character. He was faithful and regular in his attendance, and was constantly devising means of holding and impressing, as well as interesting, "his boys."

Jack Hobart only occasionally went with him to the mission school, and Ward was not a little troubled by his chum's good-natured banter. Jimmy McGuire, the incarnate spirit of mischief, had become a somewhat regular visitor to Ward's room, and if the truth must be told, perhaps Ward himself shared in Jack's feeling when the latter declared "the mucker to be an unmitigated nuisance." He never seemed to be abashed in the presence of the college boys and, with all the confidence imaginable, asked promiscuously for money, candy, or for anything that took his fancy at the time of his visit.

Jack was the one to respond on such occasions, and the gravity with which he listened to the lad's appeals and led him on to talk in the jargon of the street of some of his own experiences and impressions was not altogether helpful, Ward feared, and later events proved that his fears were not entirely without some foundation in fact.

It was to Drake that Ward turned in his times of depression or discouragement, and the senior never failed to cheer his heart. It had somehow come to pass that Drake was looked upon as the special guardian of Freshman Hill, while Jack turned as naturally to Oliver. The friendship of the two classmates had not decreased one whit, but each seemed to find the complement of his own character in the senior with whom he spent much of his spare time.

Many were the long conversations between Ward and Drake, and the manly bearing and earnest words of the latter were producing a very marked effect upon Ward's life. No one in all this world, not even a father or mother, has in many respects the influence which a boy or young man a few years older than a younger companion has, especially if he is an upper-class man; and Ward was especially fortunate in his friendship with Drake.

It was true that there was dissipation in old Tegrus. College life is not unique in being without the "temptations that are common to man," and Ward Hill was not ignorant of what was going on in certain quarters. The sophomore, Russell, had evidently been yielding more and more, and Ward found the feeling which he had entertained for him at the beginning of the year undergoing a decided change. Anceps was still the same easy-going, good-natured fellow that he had been and there was still a certain charm in his companionship. Perhaps if Ward had been left to himself he too might have been drawn with him into questionable ways; but as it was, the influence of Drake, the senior, proved to be the stronger, and so he was restrained.

Jack, in spite of his easy manners and the entire confi-

dence with which he seemed to meet and mingle with all classes and conditions of student life, had no leanings toward dissipation and so escaped by a natural and easy manner those things to which Ward might have yielded if he had been left to himself.

Miss Cole still wore the Delta Beta pin which Ward had loaned her and he met her more frequently than on Sunday afternoon, for a number of times, accompanied by Jack, he had called upon her in her home, and several times had gone there unaccompanied by his friend, and too, without his knowledge.

Jack's good-natured banter had not ceased, and one evening when they had gone together to call upon Miss Cole they found Oliver, the senior, also there. Ward could not explain it, even to himself, but somehow he received the impression that Oliver was not altogether pleased with their coming, and his words and manner once more brought back the impression which Ward thought he had succeeded in banishing, that he was "very young."

As to the part which the young lady played in making Ward willing to do the work in the mission school, he himself was not fully aware. His room-mate declared that he knew the source of Ward's zeal, and the merry laugh which always followed somehow never failed to bring a blush upon Ward's cheeks. And yet he knew that Jack was not entirely correct. He might know some things, but he did not know all.

The long winter term at last passed and the time of the spring vacation came. The work had been well done, for Ward still realized the desperate need he had of clinging to his fixed rules as to the time when he studied. It was not always because he loved the work. Indeed, there were moments when he felt like recklessly throwing every book aside and entering into the easy-going ways of some of his classmates, who never apparently were troubled by any compunctions of conscience. The struggles through which

he went on such occasions were known only to himself, but they were none the less real. His only hope then depended upon resolutely holding himself to the task in hand and shutting out all thoughts of anything else. And in a measure he succeeded, and his own success helped to hold his room-mate also to his work, for Jack was surprising even himself by the work he was doing.

There were other times when Ward thoroughly enjoyed his labors. Once or twice he had become especially enthusiastic over a metrical translation or an essay he was preparing, and the applause of the students and the words of praise of the professors had been very sweet to him. But he had not the natural taste for study which his classmate Pond had, for example, he frequently declared. And it was true. Pond was a natural "dig," and was never happier than when he was working out some difficult problem or trying to straighten out some tangled sentence in his Greek or Latin.

Ward's work was a task. He was not naturally lazy; but his entire life had been an easy one, and the habits of methodical work were all to be acquired, and while he was doing well, it was more because he held himself to certain fixed rules than because his taste had been developed fully.

Ward Hill was young. The consciousness of that fact, which never left him when he was with Oliver, was only too well founded, as Ward himself knew. It was not that he did not like Oliver so well as he previously had, for he did; but the senior had adopted a bantering manner toward him which tended to increase Ward's self-consciousness and make him fully aware of his class position. To Oliver he was "only a freshman."

Indeed, Drake, whom Ward respected as he did no other student in old Tegrus, several times had had a "square talk" with him, and after the manner of an older brother, had quietly pointed out some of his defects, chief among

which was a tendency to assert his own opinion and express his own views on all subjects and on almost every occasion. From society matters to the Sunday afternoon mission he was always provided with outspoken convictions to which he was prone to cling most tenaciously.

But while Ward did not have the taste for study which Pond had, for it was the current report that Pond was likely to be his rival for first honors in Tegrus, as he had been in the Weston school, there were other qualities which he possessed, and which were likely in the long run to count for as much as his classmate's propensity to "dig."

Positive in his mental make-up, of a quick mind and strong imagination, if Ward Hill could only hold himself to the steady discipline of the college work, and thereby supplement his weaker side as well as develop his stronger qualities, the future was more promising, or so thought all his friends. And thus far Ward had succeeded, and had suffered nothing to interfere with the time he spent over his books. Not always could he regulate the exact hours; but never had he entered the classroom yet without feeling that the lesson had been at least fairly well prepared. Sometimes he had been compelled to sit up late, and at other times he had risen long before the sun had appeared, but in either case the work was done before the hour for recitation came.

The boys were now returning from the spring vacation, and Ward and Jack had met by appointment and entered Wrinsbuc by the same train. Both had retained their places in the first division of the class and were correspondingly happy. With others they alighted from the cars and went singing and shouting across the campus which for a week had now enjoyed a state of unusual, if not unnatural, calm.

As they approached the door of their room they beheld some one in front of it, and Jack, running before his companion, drew back the head of the lad and exclaimed, "It's

the politician," by which term he was wont to distinguish Jimmy McGuire, the lad in Ward's class at the mission.

"Come in, Jimmy," said Ward as he opened the door.

Jimmy obediently followed, evidently familiar with his surroundings, and took a seat before Ward obtained a light.

"Well, Jimmy, what is it now?" inquired Ward.

"De mission's in a bad way."

"You've missed my friend here, then, have you?" said Jack glibly.

"We have dat. He's de only square one left. De rest's all a bad lot."

"What is it you want, money, candy, or an office?" said Jack soberly.

"Dat's a great way to guy a chap what's just come up to say good-evenin' to yez," said Jimmy with an apparently abashed manner.

"Then you don't want anything? Glad to hear it," replied Jack as he threw aside his coat and began to move about the room.

"I didn't say dat. I wouldn't mind——"

"There's a quarter," interrupted Jack, flinging the money to the lad.

"What did you promise me, Jack?" said Ward reprovingly.

"What was it, Ward? Oh, that I wouldn't give the politician any more money? That was it, wasn't it? Well, I didn't give it to him. He earned it. He's got something to tell us, and that's the price of his news. What is it? Anything wrong in your ward?"

"Naw," replied Jimmy disdainfully. "But de mission's in a bad way since you'se been away. Ye see since Miss Cole and Oliver has declared their intentions——"

Jack looked quickly at Ward and then interrupted Jimmy by saying, "Their intentions? Explain yourself, you hope of the rising generation. What do you mean?"

"Why, it's reported all troo de ward dat dey's 'greed to

quit de work, and jist as soon as de captain of de football team's graduated dey's to start 'nother mission." And Jimmy laughed aloud. "Ye see, I got dis money to buy some flowers wid to send Miss Cole. Dat's all I wanted. She's been an old teacher o' mine, and I sha'n't forget her. Not much!"

Jimmy shook his head decidedly, and placing his dilapidated cap on his head, quickly departed from the room.

CHAPTER XX

SPRING DAYS

NEITHER of the boys had much to say that evening, and Ward was grateful to his chum for his silence. Somehow he felt as if his interest in Miss Cole was known to others, and in the first flush of his disappointment, or whatever the feeling was, his strongest desire was to be left to himself, and he was certain that Jack understood it all.

On the following day, Ward went over to the Delta Beta House and found Drake alone in his room. The leaves were beginning to appear on the trees about the grounds, and the grass was fresh and green. Spring was returning, and the soft air and the songs of the birds all proclaimed the approach of the days which were most enjoyed by the students of old Tegrus. But for Ward Hill there was no answering response in his heart to all the gladness of the scene about him, and his dejected air was apparent to the senior as soon as he entered his room.

"What's the trouble, freshman? Homesick again?"

Drake spoke cheerily, but if Ward had looked at him, he would have seen that his friend was regarding him very closely and that there was a half-smile on his face as he spoke.

"No, I'm not homesick," replied Ward slowly. "I think it's only the dread of taking up the steady grind of the work again. It always comes harder, you know, right after the close of vacation." Ward spoke with the air of long experience, and indeed he felt as if a heavy weight of years was resting on his shoulders.

"Nonsense!" was Drake's brief remark. "It won't take

you two days to get broken in again. And this is the great term of the year. The baseball begins now and you are going to try for the 'Varsity nine, aren't you?"

"I don't know. I haven't decided yet. I may if I find I have time."

"Of course you'll find time. Now, if you were as old as my friend Oliver and were beginning to think of entering business next year and setting up a home of your own, you might feel the responsibility. You know Oliver's going to do all that, don't you?" he added, with another sly glance at Ward.

"So Jimmy McGuire informed me."

"Jimmy told you about Oliver and Miss Cole, did he? Well, there isn't much going on in old Wrinsbuc that he doesn't know. But you've had a good influence on him, freshman. If you could hear him sing your praises, you'd think all your valuable labors had not been lost."

"Jimmy says the mission is to be given up."

"Given up? Not much it isn't. He's only afraid because Miss Cole has announced her engagement to Oliver that the end has come. Why, that won't make any difference in the work for two years yet. Oliver's one of the oldest fellows in the senior class, and his father has a big business and a place in the firm for his boy, but it won't make any difference to Jimmy. Besides, what have I been training you for all this year but to take my place when I've graduated, I'd like to know? Instead of the seniors shall come up the freshmen."

"I don't know whether I shall go on," replied Ward dejectedly.

"Look here, freshman. Don't you go to talking like that. Now, here's Miss Cole, not exactly old enough to be your mother, but certainly old enough to be your older sister several times removed. Now, the work doesn't rest on her shoulders, though I don't say anything against her as a worker, mark you. If you don't look out, somebody will

think it was in her and not in the work you were interested. Now, don't let that happen. There are always some poor little freshmen who are deeply interested in the 'college widows' and all that sort of thing. You don't belong to that silly gang, I know. You're just glad, I know you are, that such a straight fellow as Oliver has got such a fine girl as Miss Cole to take pity on him. She will be bitterly disappointed that a promising young freshman, four or five years her junior and whom she has tried to help as if he were her own baby brother, should prove that her teaching wasn't worth much. And there's poor Jimmy McGuire too, you mustn't forget him."

As Ward still remained silent, Drake continued: "There was a fellow in the prep. school I attended—I won't tell you his name, though you know it as well as—as—as you do mine, for example—who had just such an attack as you have had, or if you don't look out, you'll make the fellows think you had. This fellow I'm telling you about was a good fellow, but he didn't know very much about life, and he was a very susceptible chap too. The school was a 'co-ed' school, and when the school year closed and the train went north, this poor chap stood on the platform watching it till it disappeared in the distance, feeling as if it carried pretty much all that made life worth living for him. But bad as his feelings were, they were just as bad when next year on the train which went south he thought just as valuable material was being carried away. Bah! He's learned better since then and he doesn't let any such nonsense enter his head now, and he won't be so silly again till he's old enough to have some excuse for his silliness. Do you see what I'm driving at, freshman?"

"Yes," said Ward, his cheeks flushing scarlet as he spoke.

"Well, then, do you profit by my example. Don't let me hear or see any more such nonsense in your little freshman pate. Now, then, you'll keep on with your work in the mission?"

"Yes."

"And you'll try for that place on the 'Varsity nine?"

"If you think it will do any good."

"It certainly will if you can play half as well as your chum says you can. Ah, he's a lad for you! No silly nonsense in his head! You're lucky in having such a fellow for a room-mate."

"So I am," replied Ward meekly.

"You're not guilty this time, but don't let it happen again. Now, go back to your room and go to work. I've some studying to do. I'm hoping one lesson will be enough for you."

Ward departed, mortified and humiliated by the seemingly rough manner of Drake, who had never before taken him so severely to task. The lesson, however, was a salutary one, and after a few days Ward completely recovered from his "attack," and never again during his college course did he have a relapse.

It was some time afterward before he felt entirely comfortable in the mission, or in the presence of the "venerable" Mistress Cole, but soon he was as much at ease in her presence as ever he had been. But "college widows" or similar topics never failed to bring a feeling of foolishness to his heart, nor did Drake refer to it again during the spring term except casually to remark that such an experience was not uncommon among freshmen and at times was almost epidemic, but the most of them "lived through it" and came to regard it as natural as cutting teeth or having the whooping cough.

Ward followed Drake's advice and went regularly down to the baseball field for practice in the early days of the term. He did this partly because it was Drake's advice and partly because his own inclinations led him. He was an enthusiastic player, and Jack's warm words of praise had been well bestowed, so before ten days had passed Ward Hill had a seat at the training table and practised regularly.

Jack had not been so fortunate, and the best he could do was to obtain a place on the freshman class nine, but his pride in Ward's success was as great as if it had been his own, and when the season began he openly and proudly boasted of all the great things his chum would do.

Ward did well, but the conditions in old Tegrus were very different from those which existed in the Weston school. Here the players were older, and some of them had had several years of experience on the college nine, so that Ward's playing, while it was considered good, was not in any way regarded as remarkable.

But those spring days were full of keen enjoyment for Ward Hill. The rivalry between Tegrus and some of the neighboring smaller colleges was very keen. Whenever the nine went away from home for a game a crowd of enthusiastic Tegrus "men" accompanied it, and their cheering, led by appointed leaders, certainly increased the efforts of their companions to win fresh laurels for their college.

And the season was considered a remarkably successful one. It was true not all the games were won, but then no one had expected that, so no one was disappointed. Ward had played earnestly and had tried to do his best, and his efforts had not been without their due reward. He was the only member of his class who had a place on the 'Varsity nine, and the pride of his classmates was only excelled by that of Jimmy McGuire who never failed to attend all the home games, and with no false humility had contrived, through Ward's efforts, to accompany the nine on several of their trips away from home as their "mascot."

Jimmy proudly rejoiced in the title, not knowing just the meaning the word conveyed, but as he also was the bearer of the bag of bats and the first of the "Tegrus men" to appear on the field of the college they were visiting, his bearing was as pompous as that of the best dressed drum-major might have been when, as the center of attraction, he marched along the city streets.

These days were red-letter days in Ward Hill's life. Even his feeling of extreme youth was forgotten, and the fact that he was a "freshman" was never flung at him when he had made a long hit that sent some one "in" before him, or by one of his long throws had cut some reckless runner of the opposing nine from the coveted base he was striving to gain. On such occasions he was one of the honored members of the 'Varsity nine and a worthy representative of his famous old college.

These spring days were varied by other experiences hardly less pleasing than those on the ball field. New friends and companionships had been formed, and in the deepening, as well as unfolding, life, the mere pleasure of existence was a delight. Long tramps into the country, sailing parties down the river, the meetings in the various rooms of the dormitories and society houses, all were enjoyed by Ward as they were by few of his classmates.

Still these had not interfered with his work as a student. In his heart there was a never-absent fear of once falling behind. Perhaps he might have done a little better work, but he was recognized as one of the "big four," by which term the freshmen designated the members of their class whose standing placed them in the lead, and Ward was apparently content.

It may have been that his greatest danger lay in the fact that he was a little too easily satisfied with "better" when he might have had "best," but at all events his work was of a high grade and a source of unalloyed delight to his father, who followed his course with an intensity of interest which nothing but the bitter experience of that never-to-be-forgotten first year at Weston had taught.

And Ward held himself, sometimes it is true in sheer desperation, but still he held himself to his work. At times a light which had appeared in the window of his room in Hall in an early hour of the morning or late in the night, might have explained the time and method of

preparation ; but however that may have been, it was clearly manifest that Ward's outdoor life had never been permitted seriously to interfere with his duties as a student.

The spring term was now drawing near its close. The following week was to be commencement, and already preparations for the great event were going on. The seniors had returned from their brief vacation after their final examinations, and the voices of the chosen few who were to appear on the "commencement stage" could be heard at almost any hour of the day as they rehearsed their marvelous productions in the chapel. The college grounds had received some extra marks of attention, and the society houses were all prepared for the reception of the returning "old grads."

Greater than their interest in all these things, however, was that of Ward and Jack in the annual baseball game with the sophomores, which occurred in the week before commencement. This was a great event in college life, and one looked forward to with a keen interest by the upper classmen as well as by the classes more closely engaged. The affair was frequently attended by many grotesque performances, which often demoralized the freshman players who never knew just what to expect from their rivals.

Both Ward and Jack were to play on the freshman nine, Ward being the only 'Varsity player of whom the class could boast, while the sophomores proudly claimed two from the college nine. As one of these was the pitcher, the game naturally was looked forward to with anxiety by the freshmen.

As Ward and Jack appeared on the field they were surprised by two things : the first was the size of the assembled crowd, for not only was the entire college there, but hundreds of people from the city ; the other was the antics and preparations of the sophomores.

That class had been cut into a half-dozen divisions, to each of which a specific duty had been assigned. One band

was marching about carrying large dolls, another had milk in bottles for the "infant class," and still another was provided with bibs and large wooden spoons. Whatever the equipment was it did not prevent a large tin horn also from being carried.

"Look there, will you, Ward?" said Jack, pointing to the catcher's position.

Ward looked and beheld an immense tin horn at least five feet in length, to which there were three mouthpieces. Three sophomores stood behind the horn, which was mounted upon a stand, and as they beheld the approaching freshmen they unitedly emitted a blast that caused all the other noises to seem like silence itself.

CHAPTER XXI

THE GAME WITH THE SOPHOMORES

THE two freshmen were disturbed, although each tried to conceal the fact from the other. The tremendous din which arose at their appearance, the shouts and cries and answering calls, the blasts of the horns, large and small, and above all the laughter and interest of the crowd of assembled spectators combined to produce an effect which even the self-contained Jack, and much less his somewhat nervous room-mate, could not entirely shake off.

As Ward glanced about the field he discovered that the sophomores, with their natural allies, the seniors, were lined up on one side of the field, while the freshmen, with their supporters, the juniors, were on the other. In the crowd he perceived Oliver and Miss Cole, who waved their hands at him when they saw that he had discovered them. Even some of the more staid and dignified members of the faculty were also present, and altogether the scene was one which might have tried the nerves of those who had had a much longer experience than had fallen to the lot of the present freshman class in old Tegrus.

Suddenly Ward was aware of an unusual outburst of enthusiasm from a part of the crowd assembled upon the side of the ground where his classmates were standing.

"Hooray for de freshmans! Hooray for de freshmans! Hooray for de freshmans!"

The third time the cry arose it seemed for a moment to cause all the other noisy demonstrations to cease, and the entire assembly turned, as did Ward, to discover the source of the unlooked-for outburst. Directly behind the first row of spectators Ward perceived Jimmy McGuire,

surrounded by a band of boys from the mission, all apparently as enthusiastic and possessed of as much latent ability to emit the ear-splitting shrieks as was their redoubtable leader himself.

"Hooray for de freshmans! Hooray for de freshmans!" shouted Jimmy again as soon as he perceived that Ward was aware of his presence.

This time, however, the laughter and applause of the spectators was drowned by the united blasts of the sophomores' horns, led by the mammoth one near the catcher's position. Its long, deep roarings sounded almost unearthly, and for a time drowned all other attempts to be heard by any of the freshman class, who were far from being as well provided as their rivals with suitable means of giving expression to their inmost feelings on that most exciting day of the year.

Two umpires had been selected, one from the senior class and one from the junior, thus giving no preference to either nine. It required the best efforts of the upper classmen to clear the field, but at last the crowd yielded and moved back behind the ropes which had been stretched along the sides of the diamond.

The two rival captains then advanced to one of the umpires to "toss up" and determine which nine should bat first. The crowd as well as the players watched the trio with an interest which caused silence to be restored for a moment.

"They'll need their big horn to groan for them when the game's over," said Jack to Ward and Pond, who were standing near him.

"I'm hoping they will," replied Ward; "but we'll know more about that after the game than we do now. If it wasn't for the college pitcher, Hale, the sophs have, I shouldn't feel very much afraid of the outcome. But he's a big help to them."

"He won't do much," said Jack decidedly. "They

haven't any catcher to hold him, you see, so he can't let out all his speed, and we'll profit at their expense. I say, this is like old times at Weston almost, isn't it? It seems very natural for us three fellows to be playing together on the same nine."

"So it does," replied Pond; "and it would be a good deal more so if Henry was only here."

Henry, Ward's room-mate at Weston, had been prevented by a long and serious illness from entering college with his classmates, as much to their disappointment as to his own. He had been working at home with a tutor after he had recovered from his sickness, and was not without hopes of being able to rejoin his former mates in the approaching autumn.

A tremendous outburst at this moment by the sophomore class showed that the other nine had won the toss and sent the freshmen to bat first, as the last chance at the bat under the circumstances was thought to be a great advantage.

Striving to appear unmoved by the din the freshman nine took their seats on the bench, the sophomores turned to their places in the field, and grasping his bat with a feeling of desperation, Jack, who was the first batter, advanced to the plate. Both classes were vieing with each other now, each striving to drown out the noise of the other; but the game was not to be delayed by the din or confusion, and the senior umpire tossed the ball to Hale.

Jack's heart beat loud and fast as he turned and faced the pitcher. Hale drew back his arm and then sent in the first ball, merely tossing it over the plate. The movement was unexpected, and after hesitating a moment, Jack suddenly struck at it, putting forth all his strength.

The effort was unavailing, and the nervous lad was almost turned completely about by the force with which he had struck. A derisive jeer rose from the sophomore crowd which did not at all tend to soothe Jack's troubled feelings.

Again the pitcher sent in the ball, this time with terrific

speed, and once more Jack struck at it, but was too late, and the ball had passed him before his bat was fairly in motion.

"Hey! He-e-e-y! Ah! A-a-a-h!" shouted the sophomore contingent delightedly.

Rendered still more nervous by his failure and the mocking cries of the rival class, Jack struck desperately at the third ball but again failed to hit it.

"Run! run!" shouted Ward as the catcher failed to hold the ball.

Jack started obediently, cheered by the shouts and cries of his classmates, but before he could gain the coveted base the ball had been thrown and had settled into the hands of the first baseman and the desperate runner was out.

"Put these in to bat! Put these in to bat! They'll do better than the freshmen!" shouted the sophomores who held rag dolls in their hands, waving the misshapen things in the air as they called.

"Give the infant some of this! Give the infant some of this!" was the answering shout of other sophomores, who held bottles of milk. "He's weak! He's weak! Feed him! Give the tired little boy something to eat!"

The efforts of the freshmen to drown the shouts with their cries were unavailing, and it seemed for a time as if pandemonium reigned supreme.

It was now Ward's turn to bat, and as he advanced from the player's bench he was more roused by the thoughts of what would be expected of him than he was by the shouts and jeers which greeted him. He was a member of the 'Varsity nine, and the only one from his class.

Grimly shutting his teeth and grasping the bat as if life, instead of the game, was dependent upon his efforts, with an outward calm he was far from feeling, he faced the pitcher.

It was evident that Hale was somewhat fearful of what Ward, the acknowledged best player in the freshman class,

might do. By an effort he remained calm and assumed an added deliberateness in his movements. He sent in the first ball with all his strength, and as Ward permitted it to pass, he smiled as he saw that the catcher was unable to stop it.

Perhaps the smile roused Hale still more, for the next ball he sent in came as swiftly as its predecessor and again the catcher failed to stop it. Meanwhile the freshmen supporters were not idle, and their united blasts and cries did not tend to aid the nervous catcher in his desperate efforts to stop the swiftly-thrown balls the pitcher was sending in to him.

Wanting either to spare his supporter or to puzzle the batsman by a change of speed, Hale sent in the next ball much more slowly, and quick to take advantage of it, Ward smote it with all his strength.

With a crack that was heard all over the field the ball left the bat and, passing above the reach of the shortstop, struck between the left and center field, and before it could be thrown in Ward Hill had gained the second base.

Somehow there was a dearth of enthusiasm now among the sophomores, but what they lacked was more than atoned for by the frantic shouts and actions of the excited freshmen. Hats were thrown into the air, the horns sent forth blasts that were almost deafening, and the exultation of Ward's supporters made them almost beside themselves with joy.

The excitement broke forth again when the catcher allowed the next ball to pass him and Ward Hill took third, and it threatened to pass all bounds when again the ball was fumbled by the too anxious catcher, and by a burst of speed the freshman ran home and scored the first run of the game.

When Pond gained first base on a passed third strike, the gloom that settled over the sophomores was intense. Occasionally some horn would send forth a call, but it sounded

lonesome and forlorn. All their pent-up feelings found relief, however, when the next two men went out and no more runs had been added to the score.

Difficult as the freshmen had found it to bat in the midst of the noise and confusion, their feelings were in nowise soothed when they took the field. The sophomores were prepared to make noise sufficient to overcome the advantage their rivals had secured by the scoring of the single run.

Ward Hill's regular position on the college nine had been in left field, the same position he had played on the Weston nine, but as his class in Tegrus was not well supplied with material for the infield, he had been called in to play at third base. Jack and Pond were in the positions they too had occupied at Weston, the former being shortstop, and the latter guarding first base.

Hale was the first of the sophomore batters to advance to the plate, and bowing mockingly toward his classmates in acknowledgment of the tremendous racket which greeted him, he calmly turned and faced the pitcher. However excited the other contestants might be, it was evident that Hale was as cool and collected as if playing the freshmen in the presence of a shouting, boisterous, jeering crowd was an every-day occurrence, for which he cared little.

After a strike and one ball had been called, he sent the next ball swiftly along the ground directly toward Ward Hill. Ward succeeded in stopping it, but in his efforts to get it and throw it to Pond he almost fell, and when he recovered himself, Hale was standing safe on first.

As Ward foolishly tossed the ball to the pitcher, his feelings were not soothed by the "applause" of the sophomores. The band which had been provided with bottles of milk, began to march up and down the line near the place where Ward was, holding forth their hands to the mortified lad and shouting in unison, "Milk! milk! milk for the freshman! Milk! milk! milk for the freshman! Milk! milk! milk for the freshman!"

The laughter among the spectators, in which Ward could see that Oliver and Miss Cole and even Drake joined, caused his cheeks to flush ; but striving to appear calm, he turned and tried to give his attention to the game.

He soon discovered that his feeling of nervousness was shared by all the nine. Whenever a ball would be lifted into the air the blasts of the sophomores' horns, interspersed with jeers and calls, made the freshman player so nervous, "rattled," the college boys termed it, that his misplays were certain to follow. Hits which under ordinary circumstances would surely have been outs, slowly-rolling balls, little pop-up flies, it made little difference what they were, the nervous players missed all alike. Three runs had been scored by the sophomores when the first inning closed, and despair, or rather discouragement, had been transplanted from their side to that of the freshmen.

So the game continued, a burlesque, as every one present knew. By the end of the fifth inning the voices of many had failed them, and they were unable to speak above a hoarse whisper, the only recourse then being the horns. And the blasts of the horns were not wanting. Errors, hits, good plays or poor, were alike greeted with derisive or genuine applause, but when the ninth inning began the score stood twelve to eleven in favor of the freshman nine.

Was defeat about to come? For years no freshman nine had triumphed over the sophomores. With two of the 'Varsity players on the nine, the disgrace of being beaten by the freshmen was more than the present sophomore class could stand. Consequently the efforts of the supporters of the team increased when the closing inning began, and as a natural consequence, the efforts of the freshman contingent were also correspondingly increased.

Bands of excited students marched up and down the lines blowing fearful blasts upon their horns, the mammoth horn itself apparently having received increased volume from a fresh deputation of blowers, the spectators pressed

more closely upon the field, and the feelings of all were manifestly most intense.

The freshman nine was in the lead, but the advantage was so slight that it could easily be lost, and the game as thus far played, indicated that it was likely to be.

It so happened that the order of batters was the same as in the opening inning, and Jack was again the first to face the pitcher of the opposing nine. As he advanced to the plate he perceived that Jimmy McGuire was marshaling his forces; but without any thought that they now could affect the result of the game he gave them no heed, and striving not to be moved by the din of the sophomores, stood ready for Hale to deliver the ball.

CHAPTER XXII

WHAT FOLLOWED THE GAME

JACK struck at the first ball the pitcher sent in, but either his nervousness or his failure to judge correctly the direction in which it was going, resulted in a little pop-up fly under which Hale stood with outstretched hands waiting to catch it.

Without a thought that he could gain his base Jack nevertheless ran swiftly toward first, for the lad was determined to take advantage of any possible misplay on the part of his opponents, and was never ready to give up until the game was ended.

As he approached the base he could see the baseman standing in a position to receive the ball. Just before he touched the coveted bag his ears were saluted by a terrific screech, in which many seemed to join, and the confusing din which followed quickly showed that something had occurred to his own advantage.

He ran over the base, but as he turned he saw what had happened. Jimmy McGuire and his faithful contingent had advanced close to the lines, and as the ball was about to settle into Hale's hands, had united in a sudden shrill cry which so startled that hitherto cool and collected player that he failed to hold it, and before he could regain it the runner was safe.

"Hooray for de freshmans! Hooray for de freshmans!" shouted Jimmy in the excess of his delight over the result of his efforts, and in a moment all the supporters of the freshman nine were shouting to the full extent of their hoarse voices, and were dancing about in their glee.

It was Ward's turn again to bat, and as he took his stand

by the plate he saw with no little satisfaction that Hale was more nervous than he had previously been. He threw the ball wildly, and before he could settle down the umpire had called four balls, and Ward ran to first, Jack of course moving to second base.

“Hooray for de freshmans!” shrieked Jimmy once more in his delight, a feeling evidently shared not only by his immediate followers, but by all the supporters of the freshman contingent.

Pond was the third batter, and as he drove a swift grounder into right field, Jack sped on, touching third base, and never stopping until he had scored his run, Ward meanwhile resting upon third, and Pond easily gaining second base.

Once more the scene baffled description. The freshmen shouted and blew their horns, marching back and forth over the field, while the band of Jimmy McGuire used their vocal powers, which were still in good condition, to their fullest extent.

Little flies, which under ordinary circumstances would have been easily caught, went through the too eager hands of the excited sophomores. They threw the ball with such force and so wildly to the bases that frequently it went far over the heads of the players, and enabled the runners to make the circuit of the bases before it could be returned to the diamond.

Exciting as the contest was, it so abounded in misplays as to present only a caricature of the real game; but in that closing inning the freshmen were not thinking of scientific ball playing, their only thought and desire being to give the arrogant sophomore class such a beating as should become historic in the annals of old Tegrus.

When at last the freshmen retired and the sophomores came in to bat, five runs had been added to the score, and standing as it now did, seventeen to eleven, there was very slight probability indeed that the lead would be overcome.

Desperate conditions required desperate remedies, and although the lack of hope was evident, still the sophomores rallied for a last effort to cheer their nine and retrieve what to all appearances was certainly a "lost cause."

Jimmy McGuire's band was silent now except when the freshman nine were immediately concerned. Their shrieks and calls rang out whenever a sophomore tried to hit, and they had volumes of sound with which to reward every attempt a freshman player made to catch or throw the ball.

In spite of the excitement and confusion the freshman nine were doing remarkably well, and while errors abounded, still they succeeded in preventing their rivals from accomplishing very much. Two runs had been scored, but two men were out when Hale's turn came to bat. Much depended upon his efforts now. All of the spectators were standing, and even those who had been seated in carriages leaped out upon the ground and joined the crowd, which now in spite of all the efforts of the students to keep them back pressed closely in toward the lines of the diamond.

As Hale took his place by the home plate, and swinging back his bat stood facing the freshman pitcher, there was a moment of silence. Even the friends of the freshman nine were still, and Jimmy McGuire stood leaning forward with his hands upon his knees gazing intently at the batter.

The crowd had not long to wait, for with all his strength he smote the ball, lifting it high into the air. It was evident at once that it would be Jack's duty to catch the ball, or at least make an attempt to catch it, for it was coming directly into his territory.

The pent-up enthusiasm broke forth once more, the sophomores doing their utmost to confuse Jack by their jeers, and the freshmen shouting their encouragement, although it was doubtful whether the excited shortstop was separating the one from the other. His eyes were fixed upon that ball which Hale had lifted high into the air. Upon his face was an expression of the most intense anxiety. In his

desire to aid his friend Ward Hill was standing leaning forward with outstretched arms as if he too would assist in catching that fly which might end the game.

Ward was not aware of it, but all the other members of the nine had assumed a similar attitude. The cries of the assembly seemed far away. Everything now depended upon Jack's success, and the eager boy apparently was fully awake to his responsibility.

Down came the descending ball, nearer and nearer to the outstretched hands of the waiting lad. In a moment it struck fairly within them, and then with a groan which Ward could not check, he saw that the ball had bounded out again.

A howl of delight went up from every sophomore throat, but in a moment it was seen that the exultation had been slightly premature. While the ball had indeed bounded out of Jack's too eager hands it had not fallen to the ground, and with a leap the shortstop pounced upon it once more, and caught it, although in his desperate efforts he stumbled and fell to the ground. However he still grasped the ball tightly in his hands, and as soon as he could check himself, lay still for the moment and triumphantly held aloft his prize.

"Out!" shouted the umpire.

With the announcement of his decision the great game was ended, and for the first time in many years a freshman nine had triumphed over the nine of its rival class.

As Ward ran toward Jack, hugging him in his excitement and delight, for the moment he lost sight of the assembled crowd. Before he could express his pleasure he perceived that the assembly had rushed upon the diamond. Calls and the blasts of horns, cheers for the freshmen and derisive groans for the defeated sophomores were all mingled.

Friends sought out friends and showered them with their words of praise. Horses, alarmed by the outburst,

were prancing about refusing to obey the words of their frightened drivers. It was such a scene as neither Ward nor Jack had ever beheld before, and in the supreme delight at having won the game, they paused to look about them at the stirring spectacle.

Suddenly a cry arose from the farther side of the field, "A rush! A rush!"

Looking quickly in the direction from which the shout had come Ward beheld the sophomore class assembling and being formed in solid lines. In front were the larger and heavier men in the class, and the lines were being graded so that the smaller and weaker were in the rear. Their arms were interlocked, and in a moment they would be ready to charge upon their victorious but scattered enemies.

"This way, freshmen! Freshmen, this way!" suddenly Jack shouted as he saw the movements and the prospective advance of their enemies.

In a moment the excited freshmen began to rally at the cry, and to assemble about the shortstop of the nine. But apparently there was no leader and no one to lead. Every one was for himself, and they ran about the place as busy and yet apparently as bereft of their senses as a swarm of bees deprived of their queen.

It was a time of the keenest excitement. Before that solidly massed and well-led body of sophomores the unorganized and demoralized freshmen would surely be swept from the field.

The sophomores were advancing. With a steady step and an air of confidence and determination they prepared to move upon their rivals. Ward had often heard of these "rushes," but never before had seen one, much less taken part. The custom was supposed to be dying out, and the efforts of the faculty, supported by many of the students, to crush it had been meeting with a marked degree of success.

At all events, a "rush" had been unknown at old Tegrus

for several years, but now to all appearances it was about to appear once more.

It was true that it had also been many years since a freshman nine had beaten its sophomore rivals, and under the sting of the defeat even the better judgment of the students was for the time being apparently forgotten or ignored.

The students, even those who were themselves opposed to "rushing," had told many stories of the days when "rushes" had been considered a natural if not a necessary adjunct of student life in Tegrus. Upon the ball field the two rival classes would be formed, the sophomores led and cheered by the seniors, while the juniors as the natural allies of the freshmen rendered a similar service for the entering class.

At a given signal the two bodies advanced upon each other, giving vent to their class cries, much after the fashion of savage tribes when they rushed into battle.

And, indeed, the custom was perhaps a relic of barbarism. Why it is that college students should be granted greater license or be permitted to indulge in fracas that would land any other part of our population in jail if they were once to indulge in them, has never been explained. Doubtless the facts in the case are that there are no such excuses to be had, and that silence has been maintained chiefly because nothing could be said. Surely if any man in all this world has the privilege of acting like a barbarian it is not the college student who is enjoying the benefit of the highest culture and reaping the reward of the heroism, the sacrifice, and labors of those noble-hearted forefathers of ours who planted the colleges that their descendants might be more manly, not less, than the self-sacrificing and devoted founders had been.

Ward had heard how in these "rushes" the two classes advanced upon each other and came together with a force that lifted the first of the opposing lines high into the air.

An indiscriminate and mad struggle followed. Coats were torn, hats crushed, blows exchanged, and sometimes sadder results followed, which among the savage tribes might be pardoned on the ground of their ignorance, but for which among American college boys no such excuse could be found.

It was with no feeling of rejoicing that Ward Hill now saw what was likely to occur. Jack was dancing about in his excitement, urging his classmates to "form," and yet apparently being powerless to bring about a formation. The assembled crowd also by this time had perceived what was going on, and many of them had turned and fled from the grounds, the game and its results all having been banished from their thoughts.

Across the field Ward could now see that the sophomores were solidly formed and were approaching. He would not run, and yet to remain and be swept away before the sophomore forces was a thought he could not endure. Still, what to do he knew not. There was no time left now for thought or consultation. With a shout that could be heard for a long distance, the solid body of sophomores began to increase the speed at which they were moving. They were well formed, and as they marched Ward could see that they were keeping step, and apparently there was an air of confidence displayed in all their movements. What could his class do against such a force?

With a sinking heart Ward turned and looked at his companions. Excited and determined though the most of them evidently were, they were not organized, and disgrace and defeat were sure to be their portion.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE PRIZE ESSAY

A SUDDEN break in the excitement came just then. In front of the advancing sophomores and between them and the demoralized and yet determined freshmen, who, in spite of the fact that they were likely to be driven from the field by the onset of their rivals, had steadily held their ground, the senior and junior classes quickly rushed, and taking their stand boldly sought to prevent the meeting of the under classmen.

And their efforts were successful. Shouting and at first refusing to desist, the sophomores were nevertheless compelled to halt, and once stopped, it was much more easy to scatter them. Expostulations, and even threats, from the upper classmen at last availed, and the solid body of attacking students was soon broken and scattered.

It is true that calls and cries and jeers could be still heard, but these amount to little to those who are prepared to disregard them. The field was still filled with a confused mass of students from all the classes, but the possibility of a "rush," or of a formation by either of the contending classes, was then out of the question. At last the college boys turned and slowly began to depart, still calling derisively at one another and making the air resound with their class cries and the blasts of their ever-present horns. All this was very different from the brutality of a "rush," however, and when the field had been cleared of spectators and players alike, it was with a sigh of relief that Ward and Jack sought their room in Hall.

"That was a great game, Ward," said Jack, when the door was closed. "We'll never see anything like it again."

"It was a great game," replied Ward. "I never expected to beat the sophs with Hale as pitcher. It was Jimmy McGuire who won it for us, I think, for I don't believe in a square and fair test we could beat them."

"I don't know anything about that and care less. We've won the game, and it's the first time in years a freshman nine has done that. We'll take the glory we've got and not bother our heads about what might have happened if things had been different. I think, though, we ought to elect Jimmy McGuire as an honorary member of 'de freshmans.'"

Ward laughed as he said: "Yes, Jimmy has done his duty to-day. I wonder what will ever become of that boy?"

"There's one thing certain, anyway, you've got a grip on him, Ward."

"I don't know. I never thought I had till to-day. He's been the torment of my life at the mission. I'm not much of a teacher and don't suppose I am fitted for any work of that kind, but I do have an interest in some of those little ragamuffins, of whom Jimmy McGuire is chief. It sometimes seems to me he must lie awake nights to think up pranks to play on me."

"It doesn't matter much whether it's night or day, I'm thinking; he'll lie pretty much the same, anyway."

"That's where you're wrong," said Ward hastily. "He won't lie. That's Jimmy's redeeming quality. No matter what he's done, he always owns up to it, though sometimes he puts on the most aggrieved air and pretends he can't understand why I should object to his tricks. He seems to think I ought to enjoy them as much as he does."

"Well, after to-day, no matter what happens, you can have the satisfaction of knowing that, whatever Jimmy may not believe, at least he believes in you. And that's worth something, I'm sure."

"Yes; it's about all the good I've been able to do, I think."

Ward spoke soberly and earnestly. Without much heart and with no experience he had gone into the work, and now, as he looked back, he could not conceal from himself the fact that his entrance upon it was not prompted by the highest motive. All that was gone now, but he had still clung to the task. The result in at least the enthusiastic friendship, if nothing more, of the troublesome Jimmy had touched his heart, as it had shown him that his labor had not all been in vain.

There was another still deeper and stronger effect, however, and that was upon Ward Hill himself. It had been his first attempt to do any real work for others. Up to this time in his life he had been accustomed to look upon himself as the one to receive and not to give. Perhaps his home training and surroundings had not been entirely without blame in this, for loving him as his father and mother did, they yet had not loved him quite well enough to make him think of those whom he might aid as well as of those who might aid him.

The experience, therefore, had been a very beneficial one, and although Ward Hill himself did not know it, he was much more manly, much more of a man, than at the beginning of his freshman year in old Tegrus. Strange as the paradox may seem, by being defeated, he had won; by humbling himself, he was being exalted.

"I think," said Jack that evening, when they had finished their studies, "the sophs will be so stirred up they won't let go of us now. My opinion is, that during the few days 'yet remaining while we may be called freshmen,' they'll try to take advantage of the opportunity and wipe out the disgrace of the game. Don't you think so?"

"I shouldn't be surprised," replied Ward sleepily, for he was ready for bed now. "They did feel pretty well cut up over the game for a fact."

"Cut up? Well, I should say so! Their hearts are black with wrath and their diaphragms are swelled out in anger!

Isn't that something like what Homer says? It seems to me I've read some such expression in some of his works somewhere, some time."

"You'll make a classical scholar yet," said Ward with a laugh. "I'm too tired, though, to stand here discussing fine points in Greek after that game. I ache in every bone and muscle of my body."

"Speaking of Homer," continued Jack, apparently unmindful of Ward's words, "reminds me of another thing he said. Do you remember about the 'tongue of iron and the throat of brass'? Well, that was what I wanted most to-day. If I'd had that, I think I could have kept up with the cheering, but as it was, I soon gave out and could only squeak like a pinched mouse."

"Very like a pinched mouse," said Ward laughingly, "very like, indeed. I hadn't noticed any lack of vocal power on your part."

"It was something to be felt, not seen," said Jack soberly. "Let me see. Who was it said, '*Vox, et praeterea nihil*'?"

"Virgil."

"Well, that's my case exactly. No, that isn't what I mean. I had all but the voice. That's it. That's it. It wasn't 'a voice and nothing else,' but it was 'all but the voice.' That was my forlorn condition this afternoon."

"Well, it isn't your condition to-night, for it seems to me you've got a '*vox*' and mighty little of '*et praeterea*.' Keep still, I'm tired and want to go to sleep."

The irrepressible Jack became silent, but only for a few moments, for after a brief pause he called from his bedroom, "Ward! Ward!"

"What is it?" replied Ward drowsily.

"What do you suppose the sophs will do?"

"I don't know and care less. That's the last word you'll get out of me to-night."

Ward turned over on his side and the sounds which soon

began to come from his room convinced Jack that his room-mate was asleep. As there was little satisfaction to be gained from a soliloquy, and as it was evident that Ward was determined not to talk longer, Jack too gave up the contest and soon was sleeping as soundly as his chum.

If either of them had suspected what the chagrined and defeated sophomores were even then plotting to do, it is doubtful whether the occupants of that room in Hall would have slumbered as they did. As it was, in blissful ignorance of wily sophomores and their despicable deeds, both boys slumbered on, and when they awoke it was to discover that they had long overslept themselves.

Hastily dressing they ran to their boarding place to find that they were the last to come. Even then the chapel bell was ringing, and as soon as the two freshmen had hastily swallowed a few mouthfuls of their breakfast they left the house and ran swiftly across the campus, and were just in time to join the last of the students as they filed into the building.

"They're as demure as a class of nuns," said Jack, after he had glanced hastily across the room at the seats occupied by the sophomores.

"Hush!" whispered Ward. "'I'm afraid of the Greeks even when they are offering gifts.'"

But Ward Hill's thoughts that morning were not of the treacherous Greeks, nor of the no less treacherous sophomores in Old Tegrus. That morning there was to be an announcement of winners in the contest for the prizes offered for the best essays submitted by the sophomore and freshman classes. Without saying anything to any one, not even mentioning it to Jack, he had written an essay some time before and had submitted it in accordance with the regulations governing the contest. And this morning the award was to be announced.

As both of the rival classes were equally entitled to try for the prizes, the rivalry which had been so keen in the

game of the day before was not wanting here, although it was in a much more subdued and milder form. Ward could see that many in each of the two classes betrayed their own personal anxiety when the president prepared to make the announcement of the award. Striving desperately to conceal his own feelings, he was no less interested than his companions in what was to come.

After commenting upon the general excellence of the essays which had been submitted, and expressing the hope that this excellence might be even more marked in the contest of the coming year, the president said :

“The report of the committee is now in my hand. This committee you understand, young gentlemen, consists of three persons. All of them live in a distant city and not one of them knows the names of the winners of the prizes. Each essay, in accordance with our established rule, was signed with a fictitious name which was also written upon an envelope in which was enclosed the true name of the writer. I have these envelopes here, not one of which has been opened.

“The committee to which we sent the essays begs leave to report that it awards the first prize to the writer of the essay which was signed ‘Nemo.’ I shall now open the envelope bearing that name.”

The old chapel was intensely still as the president slowly tore open the envelope, and after adjusting his spectacles and clearing his throat, said :

“I find the award of the first prize is for the essay on the subject of ‘The Element of Poetry in the Legends and Traditions of the American Indians.’ Its writer is Russell, of the sophomore class.”

“Great——” muttered Ward ; and then he instantly became silent.

His look of complete bewilderment, however, was seen by Jack who quickly whispered, “What is it, Ward? What’s wrong?”

Ward only shook his head, and indeed there was no opportunity to reply, for there was an immediate and tremendous outburst of applause from the sophomore side of the chapel. They had lost the annual game with the freshmen, but one of their class had won the prize for the best essay and they were all disposed to make the most of that.

As soon as silence was restored, the president said: "The second prize is awarded the writer of the essay on the subject, 'The Homeric Poems.' This writer signs himself 'Alpha.'" Then tearing open the envelope with a smile, he added, "The winner is Pond, of the freshman class."

Once more there was an outburst of applause, this time coming from the freshman side. It was not so loud nor long continued as that which Russell had received, but was nevertheless genuine and hearty. Still, it was the second prize.

"The committee," resumed the president, "desire also to make an award of honorable mention for the writer of the essay on 'Nathan Hale,' who signs himself 'John Smith the seventeenth.'" Then tearing open the third envelope, he said: "And this writer is Hill, of the freshman class."

The applause was renewed and Ward was delighted with its heartiness, but he did not respond to Jack's words of praise nor to any of the congratulations of his fellows. With a peculiar expression upon his face he passed down the aisle and as he joined a group of students on the path he saw Russell among them.

For some reason Russell seemed to be as confused as Ward and evidently was striving to speak to him. Ward, however, turned his head aside and plainly had no desire to be spoken to. All of which was strange and unexplainable to Jack.

"You beat the sophs at base ball, but they're too strong for you when it comes to brain work and essay writing," said Oliver with a smile, as he approached the group.

"You did well, though, freshman, and I want to congratulate you."

Ward shook hands with the senior, but did not speak. He was still regarding Russell intently and Jack could not determine whether it was a sneer or an expression of amusement upon his face.

CHAPTER XXIV

HOW RUSSELL WON HIS PRIZE

THROUGHOUT the day Ward Hill was unusually quiet. It was evident that something had stirred him deeply, though what it was he did not disclose even to Jack. Several times during the written examination which was held in "Sammie's" room, for the annual examinations were now in progress, as Ward looked up from his paper and gazed abstractedly before him, he was recalled by the look of sympathy or perplexity with which he discovered his room-mate was regarding him.

Coloring slightly, Ward would hastily resume his work and endeavor to appear unmindful of Jack's evident solicitude. To the congratulations he received from his classmates for the "honorable mention" he had received for his essay, he replied only formally, and not one of them could understand why it was that he took his honor so calmly. Certainly it was no small measure of honor to gain even the third place in a contest in which both of the lower classes joined.

But Ward Hill instead of being elated seemed rather to be cast down by his apparent success, and his companions could not understand him. Any one of them would have been proud of such recognition as had come to him, and the only explanation they could find for his apparent indifference, was to account for it by the fact that he must have been disappointed in not receiving one of the two specific prizes.

"I can't make it out, Ward," said Jack that evening when they were in their room.

"Can't make what out?"

"Oh, you being so cast down by receiving the 'mention' instead of a prize. I'm sorry you didn't get a prize, but I don't see why you should feel so cut up about it. Third place isn't such a bad one when you stop to think that the contest was open to both the sophs and freshmen. My father would have been pretty well set up, I can tell you, if his young hopeful had been so successful as even to win what has come to you."

"It isn't that," said Ward quietly.

"Well, what is it, then? I can't make you out for the life of me. I thought I understood you fairly well, but I find I don't know much about you, after all."

"I didn't think I'd tell you, Jack. Hold on," he hastily added as he noticed that his room-mate was evidently hurt by his words; "I don't mean that I wouldn't tell you if I did any one, but I just thought I'd keep it to myself and not say a word about it to any one."

As Jack made no reply, Ward hastily added: "It's one of those things a fellow doesn't feel much like talking about to any one. But I'll tell you, Jack, only you mustn't ever say anything about it. That's the only thing I cared about, for I knew that if I did tell you, you'd feel called upon to act."

"Go ahead, Ward. You know me well enough to know I'm not going to make any rash promises. If you think I ought not to be told——"

"That isn't it, I tell you. I think you ought to be told, for you know as well as I do that I feel mighty small to keep anything from you. Why, you're the only brother I've ever known, and how I feel toward you you understand perfectly."

"Yes, I thought I knew how you felt, but I'd about decided I didn't after all."

"Well, here goes then. You'll know as much about it now as I do. What has been troubling me is that I wrote the essay which took the first prize."

"What!" exclaimed Jack aghast, sitting quickly up in his chair as he spoke. "Do you mean to tell me that you—you—wrote that essay on 'The Elements of Poetry in the Traditions of the American Indians,' or whatever the title of the thing was? You wrote it? You?"

"Yes, I wrote it," quietly replied Ward.

"The one that 'Anceps' took a prize on?"

"Yes, the one that 'Anceps' took a prize on."

"The rascal! Tell me about it, Ward," he added more quietly.

"Well, the way of it was something like this. It was about six weeks ago, I should think. I'd been working pretty hard on the essay, for the subjects had been given out before Easter, you know. I had the thing in pretty good shape, for me, I mean, and was just putting the finishing touches on it. I hadn't said anything about trying for the prize to any one, not even to you, Jack, for I didn't know that I'd have any real chance, you see, and if I didn't take one, why no one would be the wiser."

"Yes, I knew well enough you were trying. You couldn't hide it, you see, from me. Of course I felt a little hurt, but I didn't say anything, for I understood your feelings, though it would have been better to have told me. 'Honesty's the best policy,' my lad."

"No doubt," responded Ward lightly. "But to go on with my story. As I said, I was putting the finishing touches on the thing, and had it all spread out on my desk, when who should come into the room but 'Anceps.' He rapped, and then opened the door and walked right in. I didn't have time to hide the paper, so I thought it would be better to leave it where it was and act as if I wasn't trying to hide anything.

"I then invited 'Anceps' to take a seat, and I tipped back in my chair and we talked for a while. Pretty soon it came out that 'Anceps' wanted me to write him an essay for his society work, he said. He declared that he was due

for one that week and hadn't a word of it written, and what was more, he didn't have a word to write, either.

"I laughed at him at first, but pretty soon I saw that he was in dead earnest. He wanted an essay, and he wanted it badly. I knew that some of the Tegrus fellows did that kind of work, writing essays for other fellows, I mean, but I hadn't any thought of ever doing it myself. 'Anceps' kept on talking, trying to show me that it wasn't for any regular college work that he wanted the thing, but for some society work, and that he would be pulled up pretty hard if he tried to slip out of it.

"At first he offered me ten dollars, then when I seemed to hesitate, he raised his bid to fifteen. I told him I couldn't write him one. I hadn't time with the examinations all coming on now. Then he wanted to know if I didn't have something on hand already written, and he looked pretty hard as he spoke at the paper right there on the desk in front of me.

"I fancy I must have looked guilty, for he began to tease harder, and said he'd give me twenty dollars for it. Twenty dollars was a big sum to me, and I needed money too. Finally I out with it and told him I didn't have anything but that essay, and that I had written for the prize contest.

"Well, that seemed to fire him up all the more. He told me that would do as well as any other. He said he could change the title and work the essay over, and that I could write another one on the same subject for the prize, or choose another subject. The upshot of it all was that I hesitated and then was lost. I shouldn't have let him have it if it had been for straight college work, but as it was a kind of outside matter, and I knew, or at least I thought I knew, that no harm would come of it, I let him have it. Besides, I was in desperate need of money, and didn't want to write home for any more."

Jack had remained silent all through the recital of Ward's

story, not even once interrupting his chum. When at last Ward had concluded he sat for a moment gazing at him with an expression which betrayed his blank amazement, and then leaping from his chair he began to dance about the room, clapping his sides and laughing boisterously.

"That's a good one! That's the best I ever heard! That's something that ought to go down to posterity, and it will, or my name's not Jack Hobart."

"Hold on Jack. You remember your promise, don't you?"

"Promise? What promise? I didn't make any promise, you freshman."

"Yes, you did, before I told you the story."

"Not much, I didn't; and even if I did it's too much to expect of just a mere mortal, and he a poor little innocent freshman, at that. It can't be done, Ward. I'd be doing an injustice to old Tegrus. Besides, there's poor Anceps to be considered. It would never do to let him travel around in such a masquerade as that. 'The ass in the lion's skin' isn't to be mentioned in a minute with that. Then you mean to tell me, do you, that you wrote two essays for the prize, and that the one you sold, and which went in under another fellow's name, took the first, while the one that went in straight, as your own, only got off with a mention?"

"So it appears," replied Ward ruefully, nevertheless smiling at the exuberant delight of his room-mate.

"That's the richest thing that ever happened in old Tegrus! Just think of it! I say, Ward," he added, as he suddenly stopped and faced his friend, "why didn't you sell the soph the one that took the 'mention' and keep the one that took the prize? That's the way I'd have fixed it if I'd been making the deal."

"So would I if I had only known," replied Ward, joining in Jack's laugh. "You see I didn't dream of my essay taking a prize."

"Well, you've got more than a dream now. You've got a nightmare."

"I'm afraid I have," said Ward ruefully.

"Well, all I can say is that I'd rather stand in your shoes than in Anceps'."

"So had I."

"Oh, you've got a '*mens conscia recti*.' You've got the *mens* anyway. But honestly, Ward, you don't mean to say you are going to keep it to yourself? It's too good to keep. It'll spoil."

"No, I don't want you to say anything about it to any one. I'm sorry I've lost the prize, but I don't feel so bad as I would if it hadn't been my work which won it after all. I think I can stand it if Anceps can."

"I'll do my best to keep in, Ward, but if you hear of an explosion that scatters the body of poor Jack Hobart over the campus you'll know you've been guilty of manslaughter, that's all. I shouldn't want to carry such a heavy load of responsibility, myself. It's too much for a freshman."

Ward laughed and began to reply when there came a rap on the door.

"Come in! Come in!" shouted Jack.

To the surprise of both boys the visitor was Russell himself. For a moment Ward and Jack glanced at each other as if fearful their words had been overheard. Russell's manner also betrayed uneasiness, and for a brief time not one of the trio spoke.

Jack was the first to recover his self-possession, which, indeed, as we know, seldom deserted him, and advancing toward the sophomore he extended his hand and said: "Allow me to congratulate you, Anceps, on taking that prize. The sophs have better luck with the pen than the bat. The pen may be mightier than the sword, but when it comes to a baseball bat give me the glory of the bat every time. I wouldn't exchange that drubbing we gave you yesterday for the first prize in essay writing, would you,

Ward? The freshmen can afford to sacrifice something for the honor of the class," Jack rattled on, offering Russell a chair and urging him to be seated.

Russell accepted, though his confusion was still manifest. He sought by his eyes to question Ward as to the knowledge possessed by Jack, but Ward, either intentionally or because he did not read the meaning of the glance aright, gave him no satisfaction.

For a time the boys tried to carry on a conversation, but the manifest constraint of all three was too strong. Not even the exciting game of the preceding day aroused much interest, and as if by mutual consent or agreement the award of the prizes for essays was not referred to.

At last Jack rose and said, "If you fellows will excuse me I think I'll go over to the Delt house. There are some things yet to be done there before next week. Got everything all ready at your house, Anceps?"

"Yes—that is, no—I think so—I don't know. The fact is I've been pretty busy of late and haven't kept track."

"You must have been busy," said Jack, ignoring a glance of pleading from Ward. "A fellow can't take first prize for essay writing without it. Not that I've ever had much experience, but that's my opinion."

As Russell made no response, Jack continued, "You fellows go right on with your talking. I'm going to dress."

Jack withdrew into his bedroom, but the sounds which came from the room did not have a tendency to soothe the feelings either of Ward or of his visitor. Jack had no musical ability, but he had no lack of confidence in his own vocal powers. In a voice loud, if not musical, he was singing the words of a popular light opera :

"Things are seldom what they seem,
Skimmed milk masquerades as cream,
Jackdaws strut in——

"Good-night, fellows."

Jack had entered the room abruptly, and putting on his hat, went out into the hall leaving Ward and his visitor to themselves. But as long as Jack could be heard his strident tones came back :

“ Things are seldom what they seem,
Skimmed milk masquerades——
Jackdaws strut—— ”

CHAPTER XXV

A CAPTURE

AS soon as Jack's voice ceased, Russell, evidently seriously troubled, turned to Ward and said, "I don't know what you think about it, Hill. I thought the best thing I could do was to come over and have a square talk with you."

"I don't know what to think about it," replied Ward. "I confess I never was more taken back in my life. I'm glad you've come, though."

"You haven't told any one about it, have you?" inquired Russell anxiously.

"No one but Jack."

"He won't keep it to himself."

"Oh, I think he will, that is, if you want to have it kept secret."

"Well, I do, and I'll tell you why, Hill. I know it's a mean trick, and that you probably despise me; but I can't help that, and perhaps after I've explained it you won't feel quite so hard as you do now."

As Ward made no reply, and still regarded the sophomore with a sneer which he was at no pains to conceal, Russell hastily went on:

"You don't know what it is, Hill, to have a father and mother who are all the time expecting more from you than you can give. Ever since I was a little fellow they've thought me a good deal brighter than I was, and tried hard to hold me up to the standard they had set for me. As long as I was at home everything went fairly well, but when I came here to college, somehow the mischief seemed to be to pay. At first I tried, I did honestly, Hill, to do

well in my studies, and for the first term of freshman year I stood well up in the class. Of course my father was delighted, and I was pleased too; but somehow I couldn't seem to hold out. I'd brace up just for a few days and then I'd drop back again.

"In sophomore year things have gone from bad to worse, for I've been steadily slipping all the time. I think I shall manage just to pass through my exams and hang on to a place in the class, though I may get one or two conditions. I shouldn't mind it if I was the only one concerned, but I just can't bear the thought of a low report being sent home to my father."

Russell seemed to hesitate and became silent for a time. Ward too did not speak, for it may have been that the sophomore's story had revived some memories of his own which were not altogether pleasing. At all events he began to understand more clearly than he had before something of the position in which the troubled "Anceps" found himself.

"When I was at home in the high school," resumed Russell, "I was looked upon as one who could write a pretty fair essay, and when the subjects were announced here last spring, I thought I might have a chance then to redeem myself, and I began to work. For a few days I worked hard too. I spent two hours every afternoon in the library and took notes, and began to think I would redeem myself, for I knew if I could only take one of those prizes my father would be so delighted that he would forget, or at least pass over, my low stand in the class. He'd think, you see, that I'd spent so much time on my literary work that it would be only natural that it should cut into my regular class work.

"After a few days I found it such hard work to dig away among those dusty old books that I began to give it up. I'm afraid I don't hang on as I ought to. Perhaps that's the reason I'm called 'Anceps.' I kept thinking all the

time, though, that I'd make it up and start in again, but I found it too hard and just couldn't do it.

"Finally, when I was in here that day a few weeks ago, it suddenly popped into my head that you were working for the same thing I was, or rather, had been. I made you the offer I did, and you know the rest. I found when I got back to my room and read over your essay that it was a good deal better than mine, and so I put it in. You know all the rest of the story."

"Then you didn't want it for your society work any of the time?"

"No."

"And you intended when you bought it to hand it in for the prize?"

"Yes, after I read it I did. It was so much better than mine, you see."

"Thank you. You certainly are frank enough about that."

"Yes, that's my nature, and I can't help it." Ward could easily see that Russell was troubled far more about being betrayed now than he was by any thought of the act itself being wrong.

"So I see," replied Ward drily. "You're the soul of frankness."

"Now, Hill, what I want to know is whether you'll keep still about it."

"You mean whether I'll keep your secret or not?"

"Yes; yes, that's it, that's it. I paid you a pretty good price for the essay at the time when I bought it, and it became mine, for it was mine, you see, then, whatever any one can say. But I don't mind saying that I'll do a little more if you'll promise never to tell any one and will hold Hobart back. I'm more afraid of him than I am of you."

"What you mean then, as I understand it, is that if I'll promise not to tell whose essay it was that took the first prize, you'll give me another twenty dollars. Is that it?"

"Yes, yes," said Russell eagerly. "I knew of course you wouldn't let it get out, anyway; but, under the circumstances, I'll be willing to make it twenty-five. How does that strike you?"

"I'll tell you how it strikes me," said Ward angrily, rising from his chair as he spoke and beginning to pace back and forth in the room in his excitement. "It strikes me right between the eyes. As if it wasn't bad enough for you to steal that prize,—for stealing it was, whatever the fine name you give it may be,—you must come around here and add insult to injury."

"But you sold it to me," protested Russell, abashed at Ward's evident anger.

"Yes, I sold it to you, and a big fool I was too. I can't deny that; but you needn't offer me any money to keep your secret for you."

"You'll go and tell everybody then, I suppose. I'll stand up for it, though," said Russell determinedly. "It was mine, for I bought it, and paid for it too."

"You might explain that it was yours on that ground," said Ward quietly.

"Say, Hill," began Russell, suddenly changing his tone, "you sold it to me because you needed the money. I had money and you had the essay. We made a fair and square exchange, and it seems to me that ought to end the matter for good and all, at least it would among fellows who do the square thing."

"You're a good one to talk about doing the square thing," replied Ward in a low voice.

He was controlling his anger amazingly, and perhaps his visitor mistook his quiet manner for something very different.

"Oh, I know I'm no saint, and I never made any pretensions to be. I never went down to the mission any Sunday yet and taught the little heathen how to become good little boys."



The shaft went home, and Ward's cheeks flushed crimson. Hastily perceiving the effect of his words, and quick to take advantage of their supposed influence, Russell went on: "Oh, I know all about it, Hill. You're just waiting for me to raise my price. Well, I will, for I've been honest enough with you to tell you just how everything is. I don't care a rap about the prize myself; but I'm not so far down yet, if I am 'Anceps,' that I don't care anything about my father and mother. For their sakes I'll make it forty dollars. Give me your word and the money's yours just as soon as I can go down to the bank and get a check cashed."

"Look here, Anceps, if you say another word about money I'll fire you out of that door."

"If you can, you mean. Well, if it isn't money, what is it then you want?"

"I want you to get out of this room. You needn't be alarmed. Your secret is safe, for if you are willing to take that prize as you did, then I'm willing for you to keep it; that's all I can say. No prize could ever come to me that I hadn't earned, and if I thought I was carrying around something that didn't really belong to me I'd get rid of it just as soon as I could do it. I don't pretend to judge for you, though. If you want to keep it, keep it, that's all I can say. And as for money, why, I'll show you how I feel about that."

Ward suddenly turned and entered his bedroom, and as he came out he placed four five-dollar bills upon the table.

"There's your money, Anceps; the very money you paid me for the essay in the first place. I thought then that you only wanted the essay for your society work. I never dreamed of you as one to compete for the prize. But the money's blood money, and I don't want it. Take it and welcome, only please get out of my room. I don't know how long I can stand here and do nothing but talk."

"I can't take that money."

"Take it, or I'll throw it out of the window."

Russell hesitated a moment, and then reached to take the bills. Evidently thinking better of his purpose, he suddenly withdrew his hand and said: "The money's yours, Hill. You can do what you please with it. It was a square bargain, and I got my goods. Keep it, or burn it, or do what you please with it. You've told me you'd keep the prize matter secret. I don't know whether you will or not. You can do as you please about it, of course. I hope you won't tell, not on my account, but on my father's. Good-night."

Before he fully realized what had occurred the door was closed and Russell was in the hall. Twice Ward rose to call him back, but each time he turned away. Then seating himself in the large chair which belonged to Jack, he seemed to be buried in thought for a long time.

Before his vision there arose the picture of the far-away Weston school. He thought of an eager-hearted lad who had entered and for whom his parents were cherishing such high hopes. Then he thought of the long and disastrous first year, and how the new boy had steadily slipped away until not only was his work neglected, but it seemed as if every good impulse of his heart and life was blasted. And all the time there was the strong love of his father and mother behind him.

As the picture of their grief over his failures once more came up before him, Ward turned in his chair and muttered, "Let him go. I know more about how he feels than he has any idea of. Perhaps his feeling for his father will help to hold him as it did me. He's 'Anceps,' though, and no man knows what he'll do next nor how he'll do it. If he's content to let matters rest as they are now, why, so am I."

It was evident that Ward's thoughts were not alone of the lad in the Weston school, but of the recent visitor in his own room. Unconsciously he had given expression to his

thoughts, and as Jack just then came rushing into the room Ward looked up quickly as if he had been discovered in some overt act.

"All alone, Ward? I thought I heard you talking with some one."

"If I was it was with myself, Jack. It was no good company, anyway."

"Has Anceps gone?"

"Yes."

"How did you make out? Is he going to hand over the prize to you?"

"No, though he offered me a good big sum if I'd keep still."

"He did? Well, he has nerve even for a soph. The die is cast. After such an exhibition I rise to-morrow in the chapel, and in the presence of the assembled multitude I denounce the villain to his face. I'll proclaim his villainy upon the housetops, I'll——"

"Oh, no you won't, Jack. To-morrow's Sunday." And Ward laughed.

"'The better the day the better the deed,' then, that's all I can say. To-morrow he hears his sentence. To-morrow he'll writhe and curl like the serpent he is. To-morrow one more rogue bites the dust, and to-morrow——"

"Hold on, Jack, to-morrow is the baccalaureate sermon."

"All the better. But seriously, Ward, what do you intend to do?"

"Nothing."

"I think that's the best thing. If he can stand it you can, I'm sure. What's this money?" he suddenly added as he saw the bills on the table.

"That? Oh, that's the money Anceps paid me for the essay. I tried to get him to take it back to-night, and even threatened to throw it out of the window if he didn't; but he fled, and alas! the blood money is here."

"Blood money nothing! You take that money and keep

it, my gentle freshman. Do as I say, or I'll—I'll keep it myself. I'll even go down to the sophomore class dinner at Mammy's. They must be under full swing by this time."

"That's so ; the sophs do have their class dinner to-night. I'd almost forgotten it, though when I come to think of it, Anceps had a dress suit on."

"Of course, of course. Come in!" he shouted, as some one rapped on the door.

"Why, it's me friend Jimmy," he added as Jimmy McGuire entered the room.

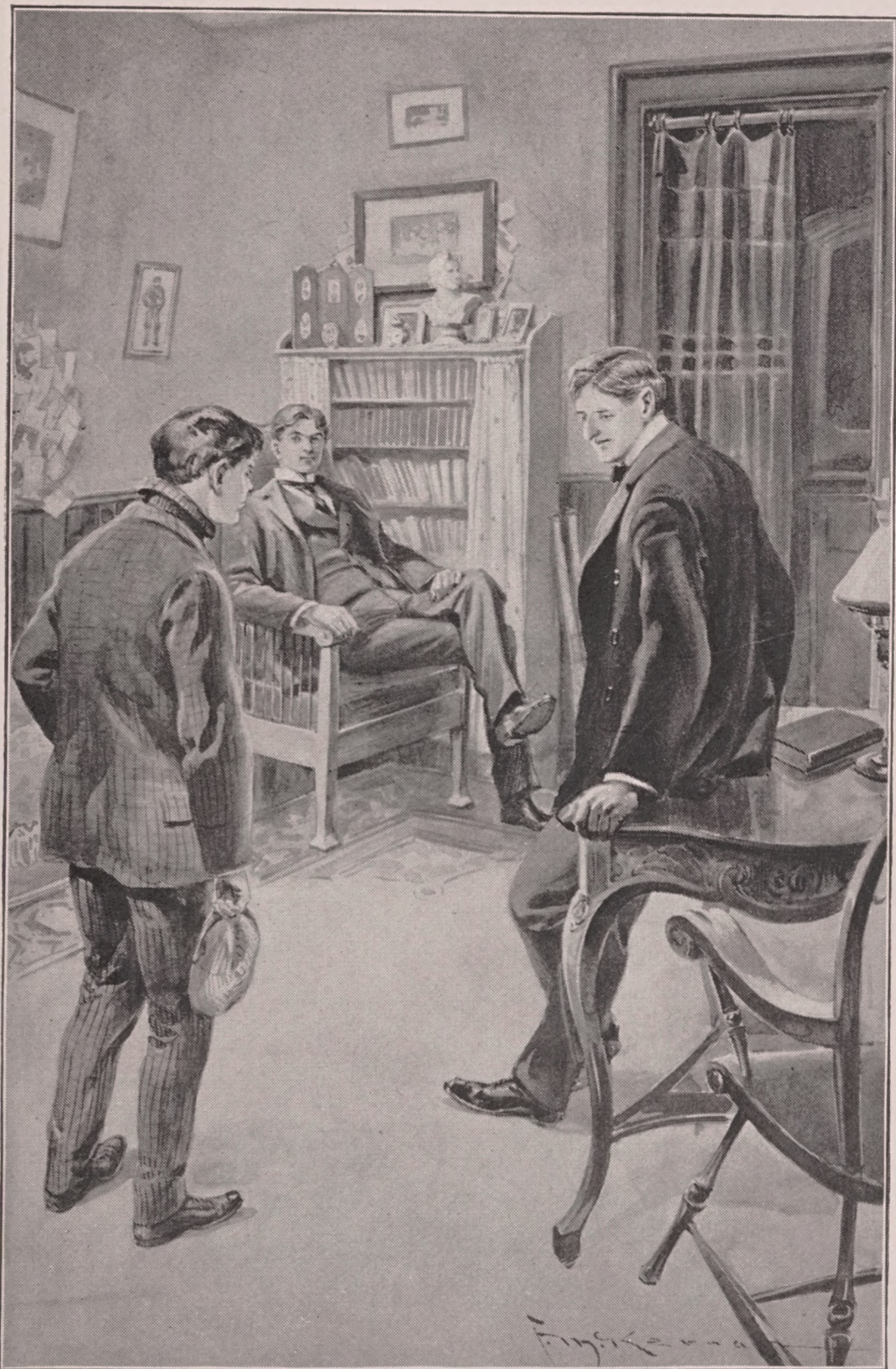
"What is it, Jimmy?" inquired Ward, as he perceived that his visitor was laboring under some strong excitement.

"It's de sophs, dat's what it is!" gasped Jimmy as soon as he could recover his breath.

"The sophs? What about them?" inquired Jack hastily.

"Dey's havin' a spread at Mammy's, and has just swiped de president of de freshmans and taken him down to der spread."

Ward and Jack did not wait to hear any more, but seizing their hats and darting past the astonished Jimmy they fled from the room as if they had suddenly been bereft of their senses.



“ ‘What is it, Jimmy? inquired Ward.’ ”

CHAPTER XXVI

WATCHING THE BANQUET

“**H**OLD on, Ward,” called Jack, as the two excited freshmen turned into the main street, “this will never do. We’ll only attract attention if we run in this way.”

Ward halted and for a few moments they conversed eagerly together. Jack was for summoning some of their classmates and making a raid upon the sophomores assembled at Mammy’s; but Ward’s calmer judgment prevailed and that project was abandoned.

They had rushed from their room in such excitement that they had neglected to lock their door and even Jimmy McGuire had been forgotten. The boys were recalled to their sins of omission by the appearance of Jimmy himself. His presence was something of a relief, and as Ward called the lad to him he questioned him concerning his information about the kidnapping of the freshman class president.

Jimmy, nothing loth, at once related what he had to tell. It seemed that he and one of his boon companions had been coming up to the college about an hour before this time, and as they had been approaching by one of the back streets of old Wrinsbuc they had met a band of a half-dozen sophomores who were stealthily making their way along the same street and by their very actions betraying their desire to escape all attention on the part of the passers-by.

Their suspicious actions had aroused the watchful Jimmy who was ever on the alert to scent mischief, and he and his companion had drawn back into a little alley to permit the others to pass and to discover if possible the reason for their stealthy movements.

Their efforts had been rewarded when they discovered that one of the students was bound and a handkerchief had been tied over his mouth. The sight was sufficient to change Jimmy's plans immediately, and as soon as the students had passed he at once proceeded to follow them.

It was true his near approach was resented by the sophomores, but their evident haste and the fact that he was looked upon as only a street urchin prevailed, and the lad had resolutely followed them as they entered one unfrequented street after another until at last they had arrived at Mammy's and with their prisoner had entered and quickly disappeared from sight.

Jimmy, however, had heard enough to confirm his suspicions, and if any doubts had remained in his mind they would have been speedily banished by the shout of delight which arose from the students who were assembled in the front banquet-room of Mammy's place when the sophomores entered bringing their crestfallen prisoner with them.

Thanking Jimmy cordially for his information and praising him as well for his persistence and shrewdness, Ward and Jack soon left him, after promising to see that he was suitably rewarded on the following day.

"The first thing we've got to do, Jack," said Ward, "is to make sure that Jimmy isn't mistaken. We must find out whether they've got our president or not."

"Oh, they've got him fast enough," replied Jack gloomily. "I don't see what we can do about it now. What a disgrace! To think they've got our president down there to grace their festive board! We must do something!"

"That's what we are doing. Come on, Jack, we've no time to lose."

"What are you up to, Ward? I can't see any way out except to make a raid on Mammy's place, and that would never do in this world."

"No, that can't be done now. Come on, though. We'll

go down to Mammy's and make sure that Jimmy's not mistaken first. Come on."

The two boys walked rapidly along the street and soon came to Mammy's famous establishment. Before they entered they stopped upon the street to observe the interior. Apparently it was in its ordinary condition. A few customers could be seen, and in the back parlor they could also see a few groups of people seated about the ice cream tables. Not a sign was to be seen that anything unusual was occurring that night at Mammy's.

"Jimmy's slipped up," said Jack, with a sigh of relief. "The sophs aren't here."

"Hold on a minute, Jack," whispered Ward. "I can't believe Jimmy's wrong. He's too shrewd a little fellow to be imposed upon. I wish we had brought him with us. He might be able to help us out now."

Just then there came a burst of laughter from the room on the second floor. Although the shades were drawn it was evident that the room was lighted, and as the laughter was resumed both freshmen knew at once that the sophomore class banquet was taking place in that room above.

"Come on, Jack. We'll go in and talk with Mammy," said Ward.

Jack followed and together the two boys entered. Mammy was busy serving some customers and only nodded her head pleasantly as the boys entered.

They waited for her and as soon as she was at liberty Ward beckoned quietly for her to come to them. The little woman at once responded, and leaning across the counter, Ward whispered to her:

"How many of the sophomores are at the dinner upstairs?"

"What for you want to know dat?" replied Mammy suspiciously.

"We have very important reasons," said Ward trying to be impressive in his manner.

"Yah, I knows all about dose imbortant reasons," said Mammy, shaking her wise little head. "De sophs told me you would be here."

"They told you we would be here?" exclaimed Jack in surprise.

"Hush, Jack, they'll hear you if you ain't careful. They've got a watch in the hall, haven't they?" he added, turning to Mammy again.

"I don't know noting about dose watches. I know dat de freshmans can't come down here and make some disturbance, I guess not. You shust better go right along mit your own pisiness," said Mammy decidedly.

"Look here, Mammy," said Ward suddenly, "I thought there wasn't any class in college which could fool you. That's what I've always understood, anyway."

"So dere can't, not even de freshmans," replied Mammy, her eyes twinkling as she spoke.

"But they have done it. They've done it already. Not the freshman class, but those sophomores who are now upstairs sampling your excellent wares."

"Now you shust go along mit your foolings."

"But I'm serious, Mammy. These sophs have stolen our class president and have got him upstairs at their banquet."

"I shust guess dat was some more of your fool pisiness," said Mammy sharply, although Ward could perceive that she was nevertheless startled by his words.

"But it's true, Mammy, we know it's true, and they have fooled you."

"How you know dat? What for makes you dink they stole your bresident?"

"Never mind how we know. It's enough that we do know."

"Dere sha'n't be no disturbance here, I guess not," said Mammy, with another decided nod of her head. "I don't know notings about de class bresident, but if dey have him you can't come down here mit your freshmans and make

one little disturbance, I guess not. What for should I bermit dot, when dere was bolicemans dat I can call close by?"

"We aren't going to make any disturbance, Mammy," said Ward soothingly.

"No, that isn't what we came down for," added Jack. "But we want to tell you, Mammy, that the freshmen won't come to a place when the sophs are permitted to carry on in that way. You don't want to forget that we have three more years in college, and will have three dinners besides the one we've arranged for next Monday night. I don't know how the class will feel about it, but I know for my part I'd rather go out to Turkeytown, or even give up our dinner Monday night, than have it where the sophs have been permitted to cut up such a trick as this."

Jack spoke as if he was very angry, and he was delighted when he perceived that Mammy had been strongly impressed by his words. Any loss of the trade of the college boys was something she did not care to consider, and her manner changed at once.

"Vat is it, Mr. Hobart? Vat you want to do?" she said.

"As we told you, Mammy, we don't want to make any disturbance here. That isn't what we're after, as I said."

"I should dink not," replied Mammy, recovering a degree of composure.

"No, that isn't it," repeated Jack. "We aren't even sure they have our president here, but we want to find out. We sha'n't blame you if he is here, for of course we know you didn't have anything to do with that. But we want to make sure that he is here, and if you don't help us to do that, why then we shall feel that you are very hard with the freshman class, that's all, and we sha'n't forget it. Now you can help us in that, I know, and we'll call it all square if you will."

Mammy hesitated. It was apparent that she was troubled, and the veiled threat of Jack was not without effect. Noticing her confusion, Jack said :

"Just let us into some room where we can see what is going on. That's all we want, and you can do that without favoring either class."

"And you vill bromise me dat dere shall be no leetle disturbance?"

"We'll not go into the room where they are to-night, if that will suit you."

"Very well, den I vill show you. Dere is von hall vhere the sthove bipe vas in de ceiling of dat room. I vill let you go up de back stairs to dat room, and den you can look through ubon de sophomores. Vill dat do?"

"That's the very thing, Mammy, the very thing. We'll never forget you, never."

Mammy directed them to go around the house to the kitchen door and there met them. With many whispered protests against any prospective disturbances, she led the way by the back stairs to the room above that in which the sophomores were assembled. She carried no light, and all three were compelled to walk carefully to avoid being heard.

At the door of the room she left them, after again whispering her warnings against disturbances, and returned to her labors below. As Jack and Ward entered, the only light which could be seen was that which came up through the hole in the floor, where in the winter time the stove pipe had been.

Making their way cautiously to this they stretched themselves upon the floor and peered down at the scene below them. The sight was not one to restore their calmness, and although Jack did not speak, he gripped Ward's arm in a manner which clearly betokened his feelings.

Two long tables extended the length of the room. They were loaded with the good things which Mammy alone knew how to prepare. Arranged about the tables were the members of the sophomore class, and it needed no interpreter to show to the watching freshmen that they were all enjoying themselves hugely. Laughter and the confusing

din which arises from a babel of voices could be continually heard, and altogether the sight was not one to afford any comfort to the freshmen peering down through the hole.

The sight which angered them most of all, however, and which very nearly caused them to forget the promise they had recently given Mammy that they would make no disturbance, was that of their own president fast bound in a high chair and gracing an end of one of the tables.

As we already know, the freshman class president was somewhat older than his classmates. On his face was a beard, and he had many signs of maturity of which few of his companions could boast. But there was little of dignity in his present appearance.

Seated, as we have said, at an end of one of the tables, and fast bound in a high chair, a large bib had been tied about him. By his side stood Russell with a bowl of bread and milk, and with a large wooden spoon he frequently carried some of the contents to the mouth of the freshman, much after the manner in which a mother or a nurse-maid would feed a little child. Occasionally the offered food would be refused, but as the refusal resulted in the contents of the spoon being emptied on his person, the prisoner evidently thought better of it, and for the most part quietly ate the bread and milk.

"Meat for men, but milk for babes," and Russell laughed, bestowing another spoonful upon the helpless president of the freshman class.

A shout of laughter greeted his words, and the poor freshman was made the butt of many a sophomore joke and pun.

"I tell you what, fellows," shouted Russell in his glee, "I only wish Hill and Hobart were where they could see this performance. That would be worth more than all this, with the dinner thrown in."

Ward felt Jack suddenly grip his arm, and he almost cried out with the pain, but neither spoke, and both watched what was going on.

"Now, then, the infant has been fed, and we must look after his wants in other ways," said Russell, who was the president of the sophomore class.

Some one brought a tin basin filled with water, and Russell then proceeded with a wash cloth to bathe the prisoner's face and hands.

"We've done enough for him now," said Russell when the task was completed. "We must go on with our own dinner. What shall we do with the freshman?"

Amid the laughter and confusion several suggestions were made, but the one which appealed to the most, and which was agreed to with many expressions of delight, was to station the freshman president in a niche in the wall which had been made for a statue.

The freshman was bidden to take his stand there and become a "statue." Some called upon him to represent "Apollo," some "Venus," and some "The Dying Gladiator." Perhaps no one knew just what the representation was supposed to be, but the freshman president was compelled to "strike an attitude" and remain in the niche in the wall, while the class turned to give their attention to the interrupted dinner.

"I can't stand this, Ward," whispered Jack at last; "I'm going to break them up."

"Hold on, Jack. Remember what you promised Mammy," replied Ward.

"There'll be no disturbance, but I'll put an end to this performance. You stay here until I come back."

Sadly troubled, Ward nevertheless waited, and in a few minutes his classmate rejoined him.

"I'm all right. We'll soon put an end to this festive scene," whispered Jack, as he at once began his preparations.

CHAPTER XXVII

JACK'S PROJECT

“**N**OW then, Ward, put your handkerchief over your face,” said Jack. “Don’t tie it tight, but leave it loose, so that it will just cover your nose and mouth.”

Ward did not know what Jack had brought back with him, but he nevertheless obeyed and as soon as his handkerchief had been adjusted he turned eagerly to see what his companion was doing.

There was no light in the room except that which came in through the hole in the floor, for the door into the hall had been carefully closed behind them. Still, as their eyes had become accustomed to the dimness, Ward had no difficulty in perceiving that Jack had brought a roll of paper with him, and also a small package of some kind, though of course its contents were not known.

Jack at once began his labors. The paper he quickly twisted into a tube, which was much smaller at one end than it was at the other. After this had been done to his satisfaction, he untied the small package he had brought back with him and emptied half of the contents into the tube, which was at least two feet long.

Holding his contrivance in his hand he stretched himself upon the floor directly over the opening into the room below and placed the larger end of the tube at his mouth, leaving the smaller end projecting slightly through the hole in the floor. Then drawing a long breath he began to blow softly and yet steadily through his improvised tube.

Ward watched the proceedings in wonder, not yet being able to conjecture what his room-mate was about to at-

tempt. He was satisfied, however, that Jack understood thoroughly what he was trying to do, and so with his nose and mouth well protected by the handkerchief he had bound over them he waited for the outcome with a curiosity it was difficult for him to restrain.

From the room below there arose a fresh burst of laughter over some remark which a member of the class had just made. Evidently the time had come for the formal and set speeches, and even then Ward could hear Russell as he rose from his seat of honor at the head of one of the tables.

"Classmates," began the sophomore president, "we have now arrived at a stage in our proceedings when we shall be privileged to listen to the orators chosen by our class to add the eloquence of their silver tongues to our enjoyment; I am sure I voice the feelings of every fellow here when I say this is one of the great occasions in our college life. We are proud of our class and proud of old Tegrus!"

A burst of applause greeted the words of the president, who bowed and waited for the shouts and clapping of hands to cease before he continued. As soon as a measure of order had been restored, he resumed.

"When I say that the present sophomore class is an honor to the college, I am sure I am speaking but the sentiments of every one, not only of those who are so happy as to grace this festive board with their presence, but also of every man in college, including even the freshmen, whose president has kindly consented to join us in our annual dinner."

As he spoke Russell glanced at the freshman who was still occupying the niche in the wall where he had been stationed by his captors a few minutes before.

"Hear! Hear! Good for you, Russell! That's right!" shouted the assembly in delight.

"I trust he will observe the manner in which the best class in college celebrates, and will duly report to his be-

nighted companions the attention he has received. We have fed him with the diet which is proper for one of his tender years (the president of the freshmen class was several years older than Russell), and if I might venture to make a suggestion, it would be that he should advise his class, that is," he added significantly, "if the class is fortunate enough to be able to provide a spread, that the diet we have provided for him to-night would be eminently proper and fitting for all the members of the infant class in old Tegrus."

Renewed laughter and applause greeted Russell's words, but indicating by a wave of his hand that he desired silence, the president soon resumed his speech.

"And now that I have paid my respects to our guest and have made some suggestions for his own class banquet, suggestions which I trust will not be found to be entirely wanting in value, it is time for us to withdraw our thoughts from such valueless and empty subjects as the present freshman class in Tegrus surely are, and listen to the oratory which has been provided by our worthy classmates. The first speaker will be Jenkins, who will respond to the toast, 'The Sophomores of Tegrus—may their shadow never be less than it is at the present moment.'"

Jenkins rose from his seat and bowed to the class in acknowledgment of the applause which greeted him, and then turned to bow to Russell, who was still standing in his place at the head of the table.

But for some unaccountable reason, at least unaccountable then, he did not speak. An expression of perplexity, or agony, or something far out of the usual course, crept over his face.

Puzzled by the hesitation and delay the class turned from Jenkins to look at Russell, who for some strange reason seemed to be sharing in the feelings of the speaker he had just announced. Was it sympathy, or a kindred feeling, or what was it that caused the two sophomores to act as they were then doing? Russell's features were twitching

strangely, and apparently it seemed for the moment as if he had lost control of himself. He was not even looking at Jenkins now.

Suddenly with a frantic grasp at the pocket in which his handkerchief was, Russell emitted three sneezes which were almost startling in their volume and suddenness.

"Ca-chu! Ca-chu! Ca-chu!" replied Jenkins sympathetically, and bowing himself humbly before his president as he wiped his weeping eyes.

"Ca-chu! Ca-chu! Ca-chu! Ca-chu!" said Russell from the head of the table.

"Ca-chu! Ca-chu! Ca-chu! Ca-chu!" replied Jenkins once more, as if he was determined to be outdone neither in courtesy nor in volume of sound made by the president. The startled class gazed in wonder at the two members who were still standing and bowing at each other as if they were engaged in a sneezing contest, and each was determined at least to do as well as his rival.

In a moment, however, a similar impulse seemed to seize upon all who were present. "Ca-chu! Ca-chu!" sounded from each of the tables, and the very walls of the room appeared to respond as the other tables joined. The air resounded with the blasts. Handkerchiefs were used and the sounds of "Ca-chu! Ca-chu!" came up from every side.

The boys were all standing now, and the tables were abandoned. Every sophomore seemed to be intent upon only one thing, and that was to give vent to the greatest possible number of sneezes in the least possible space of time.

If zeal had been any test of merit certainly every one present at the sophomore banquet would have been deemed worthy of recognition by any committee selected to award a prize for the loudest and most effective sneeze that night.

Meanwhile Jack was not idle in the room above. He had carefully reserved the most of the red pepper he had

brought in the little package for a last effort. Success had crowned his endeavors thus far, but greater things were in store.

All the pepper that remained was hastily placed in the paper tube, and with two strong blasts Jack sent it to add its volume to that which already was among the sophomores.

As far as appearances went his additional efforts certainly did not seem to be required, for the sophomores were responding already beyond his highest hopes. Some of them had rushed to the windows, which were partly open, and had raised them to their highest limits.

As they looked out upon the street below they saluted the passers-by with volume after volume of "Ca-chu! Ca-chu!" The people glanced up, but their glances only seemed to bring forth a fresh blast from the sophomores, who as soon as they perceived that their efforts were meeting with such an appreciative response from the street, at once modestly withdrew from the windows, not being desirous of becoming too conspicuous; but the interior of the room afforded no relief, and the sounds of sneeze after sneeze seemed to be increasing every moment in volume and intensity.

Jack and Ward we may be sure were not uninterested observers of what was going on. Through the hole in the floor they watched the frantic class, and with each fresh blast they bit their lips and clenched their fists in their desperate efforts to repress their laughter. It seemed to Ward at times as if he must laugh aloud. His lips were sore, and his finger nails had cut into the flesh as he strove to keep back the sound which would at once betray them if it should escape him.

They could see the sophomores rushing about the room, for as yet not one had left, striving to discover the source of the trouble. Whenever one stopped to speak to another, his efforts at conversation would be sharply checked, and

both would suddenly lift their handkerchiefs to their faces and join in a common "Ca-chu! Ca-chu!"

Even the captive president of the freshman class was affected by the prevailing distemper. After several violent outbreaks he had descended from his pedestal, but no one heeded him now in the confusion, and Ward and Jack saw with satisfaction that their classmate was stealthily edging his way toward the door, and there was "none to molest or to make him afraid." If only he could somehow escape from the room, his watching classmates felt as if too much glory for one class had been gained that night.

Suddenly Ward grasped Jack by the arm. Jack looked up startled, but in the darkness he was unable to discover the cause of Ward's alarm. The strong grasp however clearly showed that something was amiss, and he peered more intently down into the room below.

The source of the trouble was not there, but was close at his side. Ward had felt an almost uncontrollable impulse to sneeze seize him. He drew in his breath and set his teeth hard together, but all was of no avail. Stronger and stronger became the desire, and then with one prolonged blast, in which all the long pent-up feelings of the lad seemed to find expression, and which also seemed to make the best efforts of the sophomores appear almost like silence by way of contrast, Ward emitted one long and fearful "Ca-chu-u-u-u!"

In an instant it seemed to quiet the frantic sophomores. Forgetting their own troubles for the moment at the sound of that prolonged blast, they all stood still and glanced upward toward the hole in the floor. Was some one there to make sport of them? Was it the combined echo of all the sneezes of the evening? Or was it from the instigator of the plan himself who had been "hoisted by his own petard," so to speak? They would soon know.

As if moved by a common impulse the frantic class made a rush for the door.

Quick as they were, Jack had been quicker, and seizing Ward by the arm he said hastily, "Come on! come on! We must get out of this!"

His companion needed no urging, and together they rushed out into the hall and made for the back stairway. Before they could gain it, however, their presence had been discovered, and with a howl of rage the entire class started after them.

Fear seemed to increase the speed of the fleeing freshmen. Down the dark stairway three steps at a jump they made their way, and then on through the hallway below, and down the other back stairway up which Mammy herself had brought them they ran, then out in the back yard. They could hear the angry sophomores behind them, but no one as yet had been able to overtake them.

As Ward and Jack rushed out into the back yard Ward groaned as he discovered that a brick wall surrounded it.

"We're caught, Jack; we're caught!" he exclaimed.

"No we're not. We can't be. We mustn't be. Come on!"

Never hesitating a moment Jack clambered up and over the opposing wall, and Ward followed close behind. How they succeeded in doing it they never understood. Afterward when they visited and inspected the place the wall seemed to rise before them like the side of a precipice, looking as if no mortal could ever scale it. On that night, however, there was no time for considering even such difficulties as an impassable wall of brick, and as Ward gained the top and turned to drop on the other side he saw the sophomores rushing out of the house in swift pursuit.

A shout greeted his ears as he perceived that he was discovered, but not waiting to learn its effect he dropped to the ground, and with Jack sped along the dark streets and soon gained the safety of their own room in Hall.

With the door securely barred and the excitement past, both boys laughed and hugged each other in their delight.

They had succeeded in their purpose, and the sophomores never would be able to boast of having outwitted the freshmen.

"I hope our president got away all right," said Ward at last.

"Oh, he did. You needn't worry about that. Say, Ward," Jack suddenly called, "what time is it? My watch isn't here."

"Half-past ten."

"Good! We must get up a little reception for Anceps when he comes back. He rooms right over us, you know, and it would be a dead shame to let him come back after making such a speech as he did to-night without giving some token of our appreciation. 'I only wish Hill and Hobart were where they could see this performance,' " he added demurely, quoting the words of Russell which they had overheard a few minutes before.

"Oh, you've done enough for one night, Jack," said Ward, with a hearty laugh. "Besides, it's getting late, and to-morrow's Sunday, you know, and it isn't very far away now."

"All the more reason for doing what I say, then," was Jack's reply. "Now listen and I'll tell you just what can be done. It'll be the capper of the whole thing."

Ward listened, and it was evident that he was soon persuaded, for in a few minutes both of the eager freshmen seized their hats and departed from the building. They moved in opposite directions, however, along the street, and were soon lost to sight.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE MARCH IN HONOR OF RUSSELL

NOT ten minutes had elapsed before a crowd of freshmen had assembled in the room of Ward and Jack.

They came from the various college buildings, running swiftly and for the most part unattended; but the eagerness every one felt was at once apparent.

As soon as Ward and Jack were there the door was closed and locked, and the excited boys at once prepared to carry out the plans which had been speedily formed. The president of the class was also there, and in spite of the fact that he was several years older than any of his companions, apparently he was as much of a boy as any in the room. The story of his capture and escape was hastily told and served to increase the excitement of the assembly, already wrought up to the highest pitch.

Two drums and a fife were also there in the hands of freshmen who were accounted worthy of the honor of bringing forth all the music they are supposed to contain.

Satisfied at last that all things were ready, Jack said: "Now, fellows, I've stationed a watch at each of the college gates and also one at Ancep's door, so we'll be sure to get him. It's now quarter before eleven, and he'll be sure to be here before long. We'll have to keep quiet and just wait till we get the word."

How Jack's advice as to remaining quiet would have been followed we do not know. The excited company was in no mood to exercise the virtue of patience, and doubtless their gathering would have been betrayed if they had been compelled to remain there a long time under the enforced silence.

Jack, however, had hardly given his advice, which doubtless would have been of value in its proper place, when some one was heard running swiftly through the hall and stopping directly in front of their door. In a moment the door was thrown open and freshman Henry rushed into the room. He had been stationed by Jack as the watch at the lower gate of the college campus, and his appearance at this moment at once betrayed to his classmates the fact that he had discovered something of importance.

"He's coming! He's coming!" said Henry in a loud whisper.

"Who's coming? Who? Anceps?" asked the boys together.

"Yes. He's right down there by the lower gate. Hurry up! Be quick!"

"Was any one with him?" inquired Jack, stepping out in front of his companions.

"No; that is, there was only one. Be quick or he'll be in his room."

The freshmen needed no second invitation. Instantly the lines were formed, and with Ward and Jack in front and the fifer and drummers close behind they passed out of the room, and striving to move quietly advanced along the hall and down the stairway to the door by which it was supposed the luckless president of the sophomore class would enter.

Nor were they disappointed. As they came to the great stone steps they saw Russell approaching, alone, and apparently wholly unsuspecting of any danger.

As soon as he discovered him, Jack advanced and said: "Hello, Anceps. You got through your class dinner a little early, didn't you?"

"Yes, though we had time enough."

"Well, as you have a little time left, suppose you join us in a little parade we're planning to give in honor of the freshman class."

Russell was about to make an angry reply when he glanced up and discovered the crowd of boys in the hall before him. His first impulse was to turn and run, but the leaders had instantly placed themselves on the farther side of him and escape was impossible.

Perceiving then that flight was out of the question, Russell yielded to the inevitable, and although his bearing clearly indicated his lack of enthusiasm over the proposal of the rival class, he soon was compelled to take a position in the center of the noisy group.

The lines were speedily formed, and then Jack, as acknowledged leader, called out: "Attention there, fellows. We'll march around the campus first. All ready. Give us your music! Join in the song all of you!"

The drums and fife began to play, and the noisy procession started.

"Now then, fellows, join in the song," called Jack. "And you too, Anceps, you sing," he added, turning to Russell by whose side he himself was marching.

Russell apparently was not musically inclined that night, or at all events he remained silent; but whatever he may have lacked in enthusiasm or in appreciation of the efforts of the freshmen in song was more than atoned for by the hilarity of the marching lines.

Instantly responding to Jack's call, the drums and fifes meanwhile providing an accompaniment which made up in volume whatever its deficiencies in tune may have been, the boys began to sing:

"I went to the hencoop on my knees,
I thought I heard a chicken sneeze.
He sneezed so hard with the whooping-cough,
He sneezed his head and tail right off.
Bow wow! wow! Bow wow! wow!
Hurrah for the freshman class! Bow wow! wow!"

Up and down the campus moved the noisy class, and over and over again the jingling doggerel was shouted and

sung. Occasionally the song was varied by repeating in unison with the drums, "Rum tid de tum! Rum tid de tum! Rum tid de tum, tum! Rum tid detum!"

As they turned the corner to march back across the campus, Ward caught sight of Jimmy McGuire and three of his associates. The boy seemed to be omnipresent, but without waiting to receive an invitation or to explain his presence, Ward's *protégé* at once called to his comrades and took up his position in front of the drums and began to march with the class, shouting and singing with a gusto that would have been the envy of the sophomores.

Three times across the campus moved the strange procession and the fatal effects of the unfortunate chicken's sneeze were duly recounted and emphasized.

And now there began to appear various interested spectators. People moved up from the city's streets wondering "what those Tegrus boys were up to now." College students threw open the windows of their rooms and gazed out upon the scene, and several times Jack thought he discovered the forms of sophomores scurrying away in the darkness.

At such times he called to his classmates to increase the volume of sound, and, "I went to the hencoop on my knees," rang out louder than before. As the final words were sung, the class keeping time to the sharp taps of the drums shouted in unison: "Sneeze! sneeze! sneeze, sneeze, sneeze! Sneeze! sneeze! sneeze, sneeze, sneeze!" And then the monotonous words of the senseless song would be heard again.

Doubtless all this was exceedingly silly, and more than one of the good people of Wrinsbuc wondered why it was that young men apparently sane and possessed of a fair amount of intelligence, should be willing to engage in such undignified and childish performances, and march about the college campus shouting with all the strength of their lusty lungs the dire results attending so simple an action as that of a chicken which had been heard to sneeze.

But the Tegrus boys were governed by the feelings and traditions which had filtered through a century of student life, and the happiness which a freshman class might feel at the privilege of escorting the president of their rival class about the college campus under such circumstances as those we have described could not be explained, however strongly it might be felt.

At any other time, or in a different place, no one could have felt more supremely silly than Ward Hill himself, but as it was he never once thought of the silly aspect of the affair and gave himself with all the enthusiasm of his boyish heart to the excitement of the moment.

"Let's go down into the city," called out one of the freshmen as they drew near the gate.

The call seemed to find a response in the hearts of all, and the procession was about to file through the gateway when Oliver, the senior, stepped out in front of them and at a signal from him the line halted.

"You've done enough for one night, freshmen," he said. "The sophs are forming over by the gym, and you'll have a 'rush' before you know it."

A shout of derision greeted his announcement, and instead of producing the effect of causing the class to scatter, the direct contrary was the result. There were shouts and cries and calls for the sophomores to 'Come on,' and for a time it appeared as if Oliver had increased the trouble instead of averting it.

"Now look here, freshmen," he pleaded, "there's no use in spoiling commencement week with one of your nonsensical rows. You've done enough, if what I hear is true. You drove the sophs out of their banquet room and have been marching around the college with their president like a band of Apaches. You've got nothing to gain from a 'rush' and everything to lose. So far you're ahead. Now why can't you go to your rooms and just shut the sophs off from a chance to get even with you? They'd like noth-

ing better than a 'rush,' for it would give them a chance to pick up what they have lost, you see. Don't give it to them."

Perceiving that his words were not without effect, Oliver hastily went on. "Then too, this week is no time for such performances. The town is full of old grads and friends of the college who have come up here for these last few days. What sort of an impression are they going to get of old Tegrus if you keep up such performances? You have got the better of the sophs now and everybody will just laugh at it and call it a good joke. The sophs will feel the grind of it. You need have no fears about that part of it. Then this is your college, you must remember, and you don't want to do anything to damage her good name. Suppose some old fellow has come up here all ready to give a good big sum to her? She needs money; but if your silly performances disgust some old friend of Tegrus, her loss will be your loss too. Come, freshmen, go on back to your rooms now and leave the sophs out in the cold."

"Come on, Jack," whispered Ward to his chum. "Let's do what Oliver says."

"Attention, you fellows!" shouted Jack. "Back to the dormitories!"

"Ray for de freshmans!" shouted Jimmy McGuire from his place in the vanguard.

The class responded to Jack's call and with measured tramp and a recital of the woes of the unfortunate chicken, which by contrast made all former efforts seem like the merest whisper, they moved slowly across the campus.

Perhaps there was a lingering desire on the part of some to delay the procession until the sophomores should arrive upon the scene, but if such was the case their efforts were futile and the freshmen soon halted in front of Hall.

"Grateful to you for the pleasure of your company," began Jack, leading Russell toward the door, and also bowing low to his class as he spoke; "we now are compelled to

bid you a reluctant good-night. Trusting that you have not been unmindful of our simple efforts to please you, we still shall be compelled to part company for a time. If, however, you feel inclined to join us in our class banquet on Monday evening, we will reserve a place for you and it will not be a hole in the wall either. Now then, fellows, sing 'Anceps' the song once more and then we'll part to meet again."

"I went to the hencoop on my knees,
I thought I heard a chicken sneeze.
He sneezed so hard with the whooping-cough
He sneezed his head and tail right off."

A cheer for "the best class that ever entered the doors of Old Tegrus" was then given and the boys scattered. And none too soon. From his position on the steps Jack had seen a large moving body of students coming up the street from the gymnasium. The freshmen were gone when the class arrived, and after giving one or two derisive jeers from the window of his room, Jack locked the door and he and Ward, well satisfied with their labors, prepared for bed.

The following day was Sunday and far different in every way from the preceding evening, so full of its fun and excitement. The summer sun with its soft light seemed to cast a glory over the venerable walls of old Tegrus.

At half-past ten o'clock the senior class in cap and gown filed into the chapel. Ward watched them with a strange mingling of feelings. Was there ever such a class before? How mature they were, and manly in their bearing! He noted the captain of the baseball team, the football captain, the valedictorian, the prize debater, the best orator. What marvelous men they were! Would he ever look upon their like again? It was the last time before graduation when they would meet with their fellow-students in the college chapel.

In spite of his interest Ward could not keep back a feeling of loneliness or regret. Next year he would not have

the inspiration of their presence. The junior class was made up of good men, but they were not quite up to the standard of the present seniors. And one year of his own course was gone. How long that year had looked to be in the preceding September! And that four years of the college course! Why, they had stretched away in the dim future and covered almost a boundless expanse. And now already one year was gone.

He glanced about the chapel. The imposing appearance of the seniors in their mortar boards and gowns had held his attention, and now for the first time he realized that the room was filled with interested spectators. It was not difficult to select the fathers and mothers of the graduating class. Their eyes were fixed upon the little black-gowned band seated in the front rows, and the pride and satisfaction with which they watched the proceedings were manifest in their every act. Then there were young ladies, doubtless the sisters of the seniors. How strange the old chapel looked with the bright faces and gay attire and presence of the many strangers. Even the portraits of the venerable worthies hanging upon the walls seemed to take on a softer light and glow with a deep and subdued interest!

And there was Miss Cole sitting beside Oliver's mother. Ward felt his cheeks flush slightly and with a half-smile he thought of his own foolishness. Well, there was one satisfaction, and that was that he was done with such experiences. Both ladies were watching Oliver, and as the freshman turned and glanced at the senior he could not find it in his heart to blame them.

The whole scene was inspiring and Ward Hill was not the only freshman who watched with an eagerness and a curiosity not to be checked the proceedings of the college bodies on that last Sunday morning of the college year.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE FRESHMAN BANQUET

THE words of the sweet-faced old president were listened to that morning as they seldom had been. He spoke of the "open door" which had been set before the graduating class, and his tender admonitions and warnings evidently were not without effect upon even the most careless and indifferent. The occasion itself, the presence of the friends of the seniors, and the fact that it was the last time the class, as a class, was to meet with their fellow-students, all combined to lend an additional air of solemnity to the exercises of the day.

When the students passed out of the college chapel little groups of them lingered about the grounds, chatting with the various members of the graduating class, or talking over among themselves the experiences of the morning. Even the impulsive Jack was strongly moved by the services, and Ward could see that there was an air of seriousness about his chum never seen under ordinary circumstances.

When they entered the hall to go to their room they discovered two gentlemen, apparently in middle life, who were waiting in front of their door.

As Jack took his key from his pocket one of them accosted him, and said: "Pardon me; but may I inquire whether this is your room?"

"It is," replied Jack.

"Would you object to letting us go in and look about it a little?"

"Not in the least," said Jack as he pushed the door open and bade the strangers enter, wondering all the time who they were and why they were there.

The two men entered, and after gazing with interest about them, took the seats to which Jack invited them. The one who had before been the spokesman then said, "And you room here, do you? May I inquire what your names are?"

"My name is Hobart, and this is Hill, my room-mate," said Jack.

"Thank you. This friend of mine is Mr. Lyon. Some people call him a congressman. I don't know but they speak truly, although I find it almost impossible to believe them, for I never can think of him as any other than 'Tom.' You see Tom Lyon and I roomed together in this very room twenty years ago when we were freshmen like you. Or it may be that you prefer to be called sophomores now?" he added with a smile. "Perhaps I ought to tell you that my name is Young. I almost forget what my title is when I come back here."

"Do you have a class reunion this year?" inquired Ward.

"Yes; and it's the first time I have been back to Wrinsbuc since I graduated, I am sorry to say. Yes, it's our twentieth anniversary; but when I looked at those young fellows in the senior class this morning in chapel I couldn't make it seem possible to me. I almost thought I was one of them and that I must deliver my oration next Wednesday on 'The Need of Culture in American Life.' Do you recall that oration, Tom?" he added turning to his companion.

"Remember it? I should say I did, although that was more than you did when you delivered it, for if I'm not greatly mistaken you forgot it then."

"Perhaps I did; but I can remember it now, anyway. Twenty years ago, and now both Tom and I have boys who are coming up here to college in a year or two. You'd hardly believe it, would you?"

Neither Ward nor Jack felt that it required a very great stretch of the imagination to conceive the possibility of the

two men being the fathers of sub-freshmen, but they only smiled and made no other reply. Their visitor was evidently strongly moved by the recollection of the bygone years, and they did not feel like interrupting him in what was almost a soliloquy.

"Do you remember the night," said the congressman to his friend, "when we stole the freshman president? That is very vivid in my mind just at present."

"Yes, I remember it," replied his companion. "It was considered a great feat then. I don't suppose they do such things now, do they?" he inquired of Jack.

Jack looked somewhat confused as he replied, "Oh, yes; they still do those things, or at least they try to. The present sophomore class isn't much good, though."

Both the visitors laughed at the reply, and "Tom" said: "Old Tegrus wouldn't be true to her traditions if she permitted such things to die out. I know it's all foolishness; but somehow when we 'old boys' come back, we always get to talking of the pranks and scrapes. That doesn't mean that we don't appreciate the good work and the steady grind which after all provide the best of the college life. Still, we sometimes forget the ordinary and magnify the extraordinary. We almost forget that we are men, and think of ourselves as boys again. Did you ever think why it was that when a lot of men get together they address one another and speak of themselves as 'boys,' but when a crowd of young fellows are met their pet name for one another is 'old man'? How do you account for it?"

"I don't know." And Ward laughed. "I never thought of it before."

"Well, it's true. When I come back here, for example, I forget the struggle of life and all its cares and anxieties, and am just a boy, a light-hearted, careless college boy again. My friend here and I were the first ones to have this room. You may call it yours if you choose, but it's ours all the same."

"But I thought this was a new building," said Jack quickly.

"New? Of course it's new. It's only been here twenty years. You don't call twenty years 'old,' do you?"

"No, I suppose not," said Jack; but his manner belied his words and brought a hearty laugh from each of his visitors.

"No use, Tom; no use. You can't hide it, '*Tempora mutantur*,' and let me see, what's the rest of that? I'm afraid my Latin's a little rusty."

"'*Sic semper tyrannis*,' I think is the rest of it," replied the congressman slowly. "But we mustn't stay here and bother these young gentlemen any longer. It's true they are in our room, but they may think our claim is not a valid one, so we will take our departure. We are very grateful to you, young gentlemen," he said, as he and his companion rose and shook Ward and Jack cordially by the hand. "It has been a great pleasure to us, I assure you."

"You're welcome to come any time you choose" replied Jack.

"Thank you. It certainly has helped to bring back the old days again."

When the two visitors had departed Ward and Jack prepared to go over to their boarding place. There they learned that many of the boys had had an experience similar to their own, and that the returning "old grads" were wandering about the college grounds and entering the rooms which once had been theirs in their desire to revisit the scenes of their student life.

Both Ward and Jack had been touched by the words of their visitors, and although they were unable to appreciate fully what their feelings must have been, still they could see what their own might be when they too had arrived at that far distant period in their lives, twenty years in advance of the present! Then they too might be revisiting old Tegrus. How strange it would be to be counted among the "old

grads," and to feel that another generation of college boys claimed the college as theirs by the special right of a present possession.

But that time was almost too far distant even to be considered in the midst of the exciting events of the present commencement week, and it is safe to assert that the mind of neither boy dwelt long upon the possibilities of that distant day.

That evening there was an address to all the students by one of the most celebrated of the alumni. There was a subdued and thoughtful air about every class, and the impressiveness of the occasion and of the words of the speaker was doubtless very much increased by that fact. At all events, both of our freshmen were very much stirred by the exercises of the day.

On the following day, Monday, there was comparatively little to be done. There were but few exercises and they were all of comparative unimportance. Ward and Jack spent a part of the time at their society house, which was filled with the members of the families of the seniors as guests. Mothers and sisters were there and a few younger brothers, who looked on with eager curiosity at all of the bustle and stir about them.

Ward enjoyed himself thoroughly and did all in his power to render the visit of the friends of his friends pleasant. Perhaps thoughts of the time when his own mother and father would be in Wrinsbuc on an errand similar to that which had brought the present influx of visitors were in his mind.

Monday night the banquet of the freshman class was to be held. Plans had been carefully made to prevent the sophomores from creating a disturbance. At first it had been thought that the class would retaliate upon their rivals and strive to compel Russell to attend, as their own president had been an unwilling though not an unwelcome visitor at the sophomore banquet.

Russell, however, was far too shrewd to be caught, especially after what had resulted to him from his classmates' capture of the freshman president, and had discreetly kept out of sight all day, or only appeared about the college grounds in the company of others who were abundantly able to provide a strong bodyguard.

He, of course, was unaware of the decision of the freshmen not to molest him ; but as the signs of unusual activity among the members of the rival class were apparent, he naturally concluded that he must be the object as well as subject of their thoughts, and so was constantly on guard.

But the main purpose of the freshmen was to protect themselves from interruptions by the sophomore class. The fact that the sophomore banquet had been broken up and the captive had escaped, both provided an ample inducement to retaliate. Then too, Russell's march with the freshmen and the bantering words of the doggerel song, which had been shouted in his ears to the great delight of his rivals as well as of the entire college, were not forgotten.

Jack had been especially anxious and busy all through the day and had been arranging his plans, for the dinner had been left largely in his care. As this was, like that of the sophomores, to be given at "Mammy's," he had been down to consult with the active little woman many times concerning all the details. At first she had been inclined to be indignant at him for breaking up the dinner of the sophomore class, but under Jack's humorous description of the scene she had at last relented and even laughed heartily at the story.

"It vas great freshmans, dot class," laughed Mammy. "I tink it is von lot of bad poys. Dey vas every veres at once, and all vas togedder."

Another fact which perhaps lent no slight aid in producing a yielding on Mammy's part was her unchangeable rule of insisting upon payment for her banquets before they were provided. It was not that the energetic little woman

distrusted the intentions of the college boys to give her her due, but so many slips had occurred that she had found it the easiest method of settlement simply to insist upon payment in advance. Her part then was to provide the dinner. Whether it was eaten or not depended not upon her, but upon the class. She at least had the satisfaction of knowing that she had done her full duty.

"Now, Mammy," said Jack, on the occasion of his last visit that afternoon, "you'll look out, won't you? You won't let any one up the back stairs?"

"No, no," replied Mammy, with an unusually energetic nod of her wise little head; "no one goes up dose sthairs, I guess not. It vas too much alretty dot dose freshmans go up dot way. Nopody ever gose does sthairs up some more, pretty quick. I watch oudt mine self."

"That's right. We're afraid the sophs will bother us, or try to, and we don't want them creeping up into that room where Ward and I were."

"You shust keep quiet, I tinks. Nopody troubles you here dis night."

Not satisfied even by Mammy's latest and most positive assurance, Jack did not relax his vigilance one whit. He had arranged for guards to be stationed in the halls and at the corners of the streets adjoining Church, the street on which Mammy's famous establishment was located. Watches were also to take their position in the early evening and report at once any signs of prowling sophomores.

The class was not to repair to the banquet room in a body, but to come by twos and threes, and thus not attract attention from the passing people on the streets. All were warned to be in Mammy's parlor by eight o'clock, however, and after they had assembled there, in a body they would go up to the room in which their dinner was to be held and enter upon the festivities together.

Accordingly, in the early evening the freshmen began to make their way to the appointed rendezvous. Ward walked

down with Pond, and as they entered the place they were met by Jack, who hailed them delightedly.

"Everything has been like clockwork. I've just had word from the fellows on guard that not a sign of a soph has been seen to-night."

"Is that a good sign?" inquired Ward.

"Good? Of course it's good; most too good to be true, though I hope not. We're all ready and the dinner's ready too. I was up in the room a few minutes ago and the sight made me want to stay right there. I'll send word now to the guards and call them in and then we'll go at it."

In a few minutes all the classmates were present or accounted for, and then, highly elated over the success which had thus far crowned their efforts, they began to move through the hall and up the stairway to the room.

As they drew near, Jack stepped in front of the line to open the door. "Come right along, fellows. We'll show the sophs how to do the trick."

He pulled back the door and looked within. One glimpse, however, was sufficient, for with a shout of mingled dismay and anger he turned to face his companions. Instantly there was a scene of confusion and the entire class rushed into the room.

CHAPTER XXX

A SUBSTITUTE DINNER

THE sight before the assembled freshmen was one which well might have aroused them. All the dainty viands which had been provided for the feast, and which but a short time before Jack had seen spread out in tempting array, were gone. In place of them, a mug of milk had been left on every plate and a little paper bib beside it.

Too much astonished at first to express their anger, the members of the class crowded into the room, but their careful search was not rewarded, for not a vestige of the longed-for feast was to be found. And yet there were no signs of disorder to be seen, and everything pertaining to the room was in its accustomed place save that for which the freshmen had come, the tempting feast upon the tables. The dishes, it is true, indicated that their contents had been somewhat hastily removed, but this was the only mark which their enemies had left behind them.

"Keep still, fellows," said Jack, who was the first to recover from his surprise. "Don't make any noise and perhaps we'll find out something about the rascals before we've finished."

He ran to the open windows and looked out upon the street. The people were passing to and fro and no one glanced up to greet him. Indeed, it appeared as if every one was unaware that "the best class that had ever entered old Tegrus" were assembled in the room above them and were searching for those who had so stealthily stolen their dinner from them. The solution was not to be found there, for not a trace of a sophomore was to be discovered in the passing throngs.

"Stay here, you," called out Jack, as he turned again to his classmates and rapidly pushed his way to the door.

Beckoning to Ward to follow him, the two boys rushed down the stairs and soon found Mammy seated behind her little desk, apparently unaware of the excitement in the room above.

"Mammy, where's our dinner?" said Jack in a low voice.

The little woman glanced up and her surprise was not to be misunderstood. "Your dinner? Vot for you talks dot way? It vas on der dable vere it pelongs, I guess not. Vot for you comes down and say, 'Vere is our dinner'? ven you knows shust vere it vas, on der dable."

"But, Mammy, it isn't there," protested Jack. "It was a few minutes ago, but it isn't there now. You've let the sophs in and they stole it."

"Der sophs? Vell, I dinks not somedimes."

Mammy had risen in her anger, and waddling toward the stairway soon came puffing into the room where the angry freshmen still were. Jack and Ward were close behind her, and as the surprised little woman glanced about her, apparently she was as much dismayed as any of the company.

For a moment she almost refused to believe the evidence presented by her own eyes. Not a sophomore had been seen in her place that night, and how the dinner could have been taken was too much of a problem even for her to solve. She too went to the windows and looked out upon the passing crowds below, but no one heeded her presence any more than they had that of Jack Hobart a few minutes before.

Sadly puzzled, the angry woman turned and said: "Dot vas great pisiness, I dinks. Vot for dose sophomores takes your dinners? It vas pecause you, Mister Shack, blow some *leedle* red pepper down upon der heads ven dey vas eatin' mine own dinners. You get shust vat you deserves. I gives you mine dinners, you gives me your money; I looks after mine money vot I gets for mine dinners, you looks

after your dinners vot you gets for your money. Dot vas all fair. I do mine part. You must look after your own pisiness, I guess not."

"All right, Mammy, we aren't kicking. But you will have to acknowledge that 'Mammy's' isn't a very good place for a class dinner. We aren't blaming you, for we know we ought to have kept watch ourselves. But next time we'll have to go out of town for our spread; it'll be safer."

"Go oudt mit der town!" exclaimed Mammy aghast. "Go oudt mit der town! Vot vas dot you says? Naw, naw! I dell you vot I do. You sets down at der dables shust now. I prings you somedings. Vot I got I can't dell, but I get you somedings. You sit right down to der dables, Mister Shack, and all der freshmans. I be gone shust a liddle, while I gets you somedings for der feast."

Mammy's stirring appeal and her hasty departure from the room served to restore in a measure the drooping spirits of the boys.

"Come on, fellows, we'll have a spread and our speeches, after all. It'll be all the better if we can have it now, and it will be no end of a grind on the sophs if we keep right on after they think they've broken us up by stealing our dinner from us."

Jack's cheery words found a ready response and his classmates at once seated themselves before the tables. To facilitate matters, it was soon decided to have some of the speeches before the dinner was served. To be sure, before-dinner speeches are seldom as interesting or inspiring as those of an after-dinner kind, but what was wanting in the feeling which only a good dinner can supply, was amply atoned for by the noisy enthusiasm of all who were present. There was an added volume to their songs, and the class and college cheers might have been heard a block away, and not once did that stern diciplinarian, Mammy, interfere. Perhaps she was not unwilling that those rascally

sophomores, who had dared to invade her sacred precincts, should learn by the hilarious sounds of the assemblage that their efforts had not been entirely successful.

It was not much of a dinner which Mammy provided that night. She sent her messengers to various parts of the town and called upon all her friends to aid her in her extremity. A degree of success rewarded her efforts, but roast turkeys and viands of a similar character are wont to require time as one of the ingredients in their proper preparation, and of course, such elements were lacking in the feast.

The lack, however, did not serve to check entirely the determination of the class to have a good time, and the shouts and songs, the speeches and applause, continued for hours. Doubtless the rival class learned in some mysterious manner that the class dinner had not been broken up, though they must have been puzzled to understand how there could be so much enthusiasm on an occasion where all that goes to provide that necessary element in a good time must have been wanting, for none knew better than they what had become of the freshman banquet.

At a late hour the class departed; after thanking Mammy for her trouble, and causing a smile of content to appear upon that worthy woman's face by the substantial form in which their gratitude found expression, they proceeded to serenade some of the professors and to march about the college grounds, chanting their songs and shouting their class cheers and cries.

Only a few sophomore men were seen, and these few looked on with amazement. Surely the present freshman class was composed of different material from any which had entered old Tegrus in many years.

On the following morning a sign was displayed from the tower of the college chapel, upon which in letters of bright green had been painted these words:

Who can cloy the hungry edge of appetite
By bare imagination of a feast?

Who had placed it there no one knew. The sophomores took pains to express their ignorance, and the freshmen were equally confident that the words in no sense applied to them. How could they? They declared they had never even attempted to "cloy the hungry edge" in any such manner. They always had an abundance at their feasts, yes, enough and to spare for such creatures as were to be found in their rival class.

At all events the sign disappeared before noon and no one knew the manner of its departure or the place to which it had been consigned.

The day was to be a stirring one. In the afternoon the class day exercises of the seniors were to be held, and in the evening was the "junior ex.," as the annual contest for prizes for orations was called, the "ex." being generally supposed to stand for "exhibition."

Ward was in his room preparing to go over to his boarding place for luncheon when Jack came bustling in and said:

"I've found out all about it, Ward. I know how it was done."

"Found out what? Know how what was done? What are you talking about?"

"Why, about our class dinner last night. I've found out how the sophs stole it. I met Anceps out here and he owned up to the whole thing."

"Well, how was it?"

"You're a great fellow, Ward. Why didn't you warm up and tear around and get excited? No, you just stand there and say as calmly as if you were—were—were reciting in Greek, 'Well, how was it.' That's a fine way to treat a fellow with such a story as I have."

"How was it, Jack? How was it? Tell me! Tell me! How was it?" was Ward's reply, the lad dancing wildly about the room as he spoke, and pretending to be greatly excited.

Jack laughed and said: "You can poke all the fun at it you please, but I think we did well last night. I don't think there's another class in college that would have had the nerve to go on with their spread when the spread itself had gone on somewhere else. But that was what I was going to tell you about. Well, Anceps owns up they were beaten at their own game. They found out just when and where our dinner was to be, and just as it began to be dark they sent three of their fellows down to Barney's."

"Barney's? Who is Barney?"

"Oh, he's the newsdealer down there on Church Street, just four or five doors above Mammy's. You know the place, I'm sure."

"Yes, I know where it is. But I didn't understand what the sophs wanted to go to Barney's for, when we were to have our spread at Mammy's."

"That's what I'm trying to tell you, only you want to talk all the time and don't give a fellow half a chance," said Jack with a hearty laugh. "Well, you know how the roofs of the houses all join down there. You can walk the length of the block right along on them. Barney let these three fellows up through the trap door in his roof, and they went straight for Mammy's. They hid behind the chimneys till it was getting dark, and they kept a pretty good outlook all the time. After the streets were cleared and pretty much everybody had gone home to dinner they knew we'd be on deck in a little while, so they came out and went to work. They had brought the mugs and bibs and a can of milk, with them."

"They took a turn around one of the chimneys and then let Anceps down by the rope till he was right in the room where we were to have our dinner. That rascal Anceps was right there, yes, sir, right there in the closet in the corner when I went in to see that everything was all right! If I'd known he'd been there, our *menu* would have been a little more elaborate than we had to put up with, but

that's neither here nor there. Just as soon as I went out of the room Anceps rushed to the window and gave the signal, and the fellows lowered a bag from the roof. He took the bag and according to his story it didn't take very long for him to fill it, for he just emptied every dish on the table into it. Fine mess he must have had of it. That is the only comfort we can get out of it, that the sophs couldn't eat the dinner themselves very well. Then he takes his bag, rushes to the window, adjusts the noose under his arms, and holding on to his ill-gotten gains begins to mount toward the skies. As soon as he was on the roof once more, he and the other two fellows start out across the roofs, come to Barney's, down the stairs they go, and out around the corner, and nobody one whit the wiser. Say, Ward, that wasn't a bad trick for sophs, was it? And all the time we were watching the back and front of Mammy's house, and the corners of the streets down below, never once dreaming that the sophs would come *via* the sky."

Ward laughed, and as he was now ready to go he approached the window and looked out upon the campus. Along the path three boys were walking. It was evident at once that they were strangers, and the presence of an older man with them at once disclosed to Ward who and what they were.

"Look there, Jack," he said, "there are some of the sub-freshmen. Probably they're up here taking their entrance exams."

"That's so," replied Jack as he glanced out at the boys. In a moment however he had raised the window and thrusting his head out hailed the new-comers. "Hey, fresh! Ho, fresh! Take off your hats, freshmen. Make a nice little bow there!"

"Thank you," called back one of the boys, lifting his hat as he spoke. "We only hope we'll be so fortunate as to be what you've called us."

“That fellow’s all right,” said Jack as he turned to Ward. “But you don’t know what a relief it is to yell ‘fresh’ at somebody. I’ve had it and heard it and dreamed it for a whole year now, and if I don’t get square with somebody for it my name isn’t Jack Hobart.”

CHAPTER XXXI

WARD HILL'S BEST WORK

THE brief remaining time before the close of the year was so filled with change and excitement that Ward and Jack were seldom left to themselves. Jack's desire to yell, "Hey, fresh! Ho, fresh!" found many opportunities to gratify itself, and the pent-up indignation, strong in spite of the defense he had made for his own class, vented itself upon the timid lads who had come up to Tegrus to take their entrance examinations and who were frightened by the ordeal and profoundly impressed by the dignity and bearing of those fortunate beings who had succeeded in being enrolled among the college boys and who now were well started on their journey toward the dim and far-away point on the horizon known as graduation.

At times Jack would be derided himself by the upper classmen and even by the members of his own class for the salutations with which he greeted the incoming class; but he cared little for that. He had been a freshman for an entire year, and now that there was some one below him, all the indignities which he himself had suffered he was inclined to visit upon their innocent heads.

"It's a little ahead of time," Ward would say. "You aren't a sophomore till the end of the year, and that's two or three days off yet. Then too, there are the reports to be heard from. Perhaps they'll show us up as among those perennials who stick to the freshman year as long as they can hold on."

"I don't care," Jack would reply. "I'm going to get what fun there is to be had out of it, anyway. I tell you, Ward, you can't imagine what good it does me to yell,

‘Ho, freshman.’ I’m not afraid of being one again next year, either. You know there isn’t any danger of it yourself.”

And Ward did know it, as his room-mate said. They had both worked steadily through the year and their reward was at hand. All the stories of pranks and jokes which have been recorded in these pages were the exception not the rule of college life. From day to day there was the steady grind and round of study and recitation. Weary of it the lads frequently were, for even the best of tasks becomes monotonous; but they had tied themselves to a fixed time for study, and the secret of their success lay largely in that fact.

Occasionally, it is true, the regular hours would be broken in upon by outside demands and unusual calls, but always the time was made up. Sometimes it was done by preparing their lessons in advance and sometimes by sitting up late into the night, but never had a lesson been entirely neglected, although it might be somewhat slighted occasionally.

The cause of all this was in Ward Hill himself. The memory of that year in Weston when he had made such a complete failure hung over him like some tragic event in his life, as indeed it was. It had left its scar as well as its impress, and the thought of it never failed to arouse Ward to fresh efforts.

He was one of those lads whose only safety lay in fixed and systematic ways of life. Jack, if left to himself, might have been as happy with a fair degree of work and moderate attainments as he would with higher. But he would never fall very low though he might never rise very high.

Ward, on the contrary, in spite of the fact that his ways were usually much more quiet than those of his impressible room-mate, was a boy to whom there could be no middle ground. He was an extremist, and when he had fallen into evil ways in that almost fatal year in his preparatory course,

he had gone on until he was among the foremost of the disorderly elements in the Weston school. Now that he had reversed the order and was doing good work, he had labored almost with a feverish anxiety, realizing that one little slip would mean for him so much more than it would for many of his friends and classmates.

But Ward Hill was no prig, as we have learned, I trust, in the course of this story. His natural impulses were good, and he had been carefully reared in a Christian home, almost too carefully some of his friends had thought, who had attributed his downfall two years before to the fact that he had been kept from evil, but had not been trained to decide and act for himself.

His good work in old Tegrus had not only been the result of a strong ambition to lead, but in it there was a certain element of fear. He had held himself rigidly, sometimes desperately and without any appetite for his tasks, and because he was simply afraid to depart from his fixed rules even once; his only hope lay in doggedly, tenaciously holding on, and 'hold on' he did all through the year.

Jack had felt the influence, as we have said. He would have been probably content to have held a medium grade, but he had done better and was still in the first division of his class, though not nearly so high in his standing as was Ward.

Their classmate, Pond, was markedly different from them both. His had been a love of studying for itself. He had no better ability than Ward, and some were inclined to dispute his possession of as much. It was fondly claimed by Ward's friends that if he would only exert himself as Pond did that he could easily outstrip him. Ward himself knew better than that, for no one estimated Pond's scholastic powers higher than he. Pond worked because he loved the work; while Ward worked because he was thinking of what lay beyond it, and the element of fear of himself was not wanting, as we know; Jack worked mostly because Ward

did ; but the result of their efforts had placed all three in the first division of their class, and it was commonly thought that the first position would be held by Pond while Ward Hill would rank second, and all were content.

They had, however, gained an insight into the steady work of college life and had in different degrees enjoyed it. The pranks and stirring events recorded in these chapters had not taken the place of it all. All this, as Jack declared, had been the spice of this college life, not the life itself, and while the contests with the sophomores had aroused them, they had never been looked at as the solid or regular part. They were talked of more, and in detail might be longer remembered, for certainly the "old grads" seemed to take special delight in dwelling upon the escapades of their own younger years spent under the shadow of the walls of old Tegrus ; but after all, it was generally understood that these only supplemented and did not supplant the more serious and sober side which was appreciated but taken for granted, as men seldom refer to or even speak of the sunlight as an element in their daily lives.

The society houses, as we have said, were filled with guests, and these were busy times for our two freshmen, who were called upon to assist in the entertainment. To Jack this was easy, but for Ward, whose life had been spent in a small village, it was a more difficult task. Perhaps for that very reason it did him the more good, however. At all events he thoroughly enjoyed it and received many warm words of praise for the manner in which he acquitted himself.

One little incident deeply impressed him. Jack's mother, like both of Ward's parents, was unable to be present at the festivities of commencement week ; but his father was expected, and in the afternoon, about an hour before the exercises of classday on the campus, Jack discovered him approaching the yard of the Delta Beta house.

With a yell of delight that might have caused a wild In-



“Jack discovered him approaching.”

dian to feel ashamed of his powers, Jack leaped from the piazza where he and Ward were seated with some of the visitors, and ran swiftly down the path. In a moment he had clasped his father in his arms, and to Ward's intense surprise, the eager lad kissed him as if he had been a schoolboy.

There was a strange feeling in Ward's heart as he saw the act. He himself loved his own father with a passionate devotion, but he had never been encouraged to give any expression to his feelings. To have made such a demonstration as Jack had just made would have been very far from his thoughts, and yet somehow he felt that his own eyes were moist as he watched his chum coming up the walk with his father. Jack's arm was thrust under that of his father, and as they came nearer, the happy lad said :

"Here's my father, Ward. Come on and shake hands with the best daddy a son of old Tegrus ever had. I can down you now," he added, turning to his father as he spoke. "The last time I was home you almost succeeded in putting me on the bed, but you can't do it now. I'll show you as soon as we go over to our room."

"Did you ever see such a boy?" said Mr. Hobart, as he greeted Ward warmly. "He's just irrepressible. I don't see how you have put up with him for a whole year."

"Neither do I," Jack said laughingly. "I'll leave you two here a minute while I go in and give a message Miss Cole has sent up to Oliver."

"I want to thank you for what you've done for my boy," said Mr. Hobart, as he seated himself beside Ward in one of the piazza chairs. "He's devotedly attached to you, and says you are the one who has made him do so well this year."

"He's judging by his heart, not his head, I'm afraid," replied Ward softly.

"Not a bit of it; not a bit of it. He really is a rattled fellow, and I think he must have bothered a young man of your studious habits. When he's home I know he stirs

everything up from attic to cellar, and I fancy he's not been altogether quiet here. But Jack's a good boy, if a doting old father is any judge."

"Good!" said Ward enthusiastically, "good! that isn't the word. He's the best fellow I ever knew in all my life. He's the most popular fellow in his class, and I don't know but in college. Everybody likes Jack. He's as straight as a die, and while he's pretty sure to be in every scrape that comes along, he's never in anything low or mean. I never had a brother, but it doesn't seem to me as if I could have thought as much of him, if I'd had one, as I do of Jack."

"You're good to my boy," replied Mr. Hobart with glistening eyes, "and I'm glad you two are such friends. Do you know what he has talked about the most, of your influence upon him?"

"I can't imagine, unless it is that he thinks I've helped him to study a little more than he did the last year at Weston. I can't think of anything else."

"No, it isn't that, though he does appreciate your example in that line, I am sure. It's your work in the mission school."

"What!" said Ward, sitting back in his chair at once. His face flushed, and he was evidently strongly moved. "I never thought of that," he said at last. "There isn't much in that, anyway. I'll be honest with you, Mr. Hobart, and tell you just how that mission work is. I never thought of it when I came up here. Indeed, I never cared very much about it, if I should tell you the truth. Of course I was brought up in a Christian home and I trust I am not ashamed of such things, but I never felt any interest in that line of work. I don't know just how it started. I went into it, and of course I've become interested in some of the boys, but I never felt that I was much good at it. I can't talk out in the meetings the way some of the fellows can, and I never made much, if any, pretensions to being a saint."

"That's just it. Jack says its the grip you've got on some of those hoodlums. He says some of them would do anything for you."

"Oh, he means Jimmy McGuire, I suppose," and Ward laughed. "Well, Jimmy is a pretty good friend of mine, I believe; but I never looked at it in the way you speak of."

And yet Ward was moved more than he cared to show by Mr. Hobart's words. He had not even thought of Jack in connection with the work, but now he felt as if he had been the one to receive the greatest benefit after all. And indeed he was right. It was the very fact that he had been working for others that had helped most of all to help himself. His motives in the beginning may not have been of the highest; but he had gone into the work, and many a time the thought of what he might be able to do to help the apparently unresponsive Jimmy McGuire and his companions had kept him to the task when it had become distasteful and even burdensome.

His meditations were interrupted by the return of Jack, who called out: "Come on, you two! We must go over to the chapel, or we won't get a seat."

Jack once more thrust his arms under those of Ward and his father, and together they started from the Delta Beta house. To Ward it was a time of pure enjoyment. In his own mind he was wondering if he ever could feel quite as free with his father as Jack did with his. Of his own father's intense love he had no doubt, but it was seldom expressed, and as for the manner in which Jack was acting, why it would simply be impossible for him to do that. Still in his feelings that day there was perhaps an undefined longing for something which he could not have explained even to himself. He could not do as Jack did, but somehow he was glad that his chum could, and as they walked on he could not keep back the feeling that Mr. Hobart was as much in his boy's confidence as was Ward Hill himself.

There was no lack of dignity. He could readily see that

Mr. Hobart was a man to command the respect of all who met him. It was a freedom, a confidence, a something which seemed to break down all the barriers between father and son and make each understand the other. Ward Hill did not understand, but what he hungered for was not less of love, but more of affection. Happy, yea fortunate, is the lad who is free to go to his father as to a familiar friend. Beautiful indeed is that relation which Ward Hill saw that day existing between Jack and Mr. Hobart. With such a father and such a feeling of confidence, safe was the boy forever.

They had now come to the chapel, and the sight before them was a stirring one. It was filled to the doors, and the interest and happiness of all the assembly, as well as the bright colors and the gay apparel of the crowds of young ladies, might have moved older hearts than those of the entering trio. Jack displayed the tickets which entitled them to reserved seats, and in a few moments they were listening eagerly to the exercises of the day.

CHAPTER XXXII

CONCLUSION

IN less than an hour the assembly departed from the college chapel to the place on the campus where the further exercises were to be held. The oration and poem to which Ward had listened were said to have been very excellent productions, and the eager freshman had no difficulty in accepting the popular verdict. It was true that both were soon forgotten, but that may not have been the fault of the listeners. Certainly the language was "beautiful," and if the ideas presented were not startlingly novel or fresh, friendship and the pride of the fathers and mothers, to say nothing of the partiality of the friends of the graduating class, provided an atmosphere which was stimulating to the young orator and poet. And Ward was too deeply impressed to be critical.

Upon the campus the seniors arranged themselves in a circle, and surrounded as they were by a larger circle of friends, the appearance they presented was very striking. Overhead were the interlacing branches of the old trees which for generations had witnessed sights almost as marvelous as that of the present day. The eager young faces, the thoughts of the conflicts and struggles now all happily passed, the venerable buildings, the sloping hillside, all combined to furnish the setting of a picture as suggestive as it was inspiring.

Here the ivy oration, the prophecy, the class song, and various other features of classday were presented. The oration was thought to be eloquent, the prophecy shrewd and witty as the prophet outlined the future of the boys in terms which, if not as old as old Tegrus, still had done duty

on similar occasions for many years. They were received, however, with as fresh an interest, and applauded and laughed at with as much zest as if they were then for the first time heard.

It was the still fresh story of young life girding itself for the inevitable conflict, and in the presence of such a sight every one felt the stirring of his own impulses, perhaps for a long time dormant in the monotonous and wearying round of the struggle for existence.

That evening occurred the "juniors' ex," and as the young orators in cap and gown came one by one upon the platform, they discussed the more profound problems of religion and science in terms which conveyed the impression that those things which had troubled and perplexed the greatest thinkers of the world, were all simple and easily explained or reconciled by them.

Ward was stirred by the contest perhaps more than by any other feature of commencement week, for in his heart was the longing to enter the competition himself. There was no part of his work he enjoyed more, and already for a freshman he had won the reputation of being a very promising speaker, and only two years remained before he too would be eligible for a place on the program of the "junior's ex."

The next day were the commencement exercises proper. The long procession, headed by the president in his cap and gown, and followed by the members of the faculty and Board of trustees, and they in turn followed by the wonderful senior class, they too arrayed in the imposing garb, was soon in motion. Old graduates, friends of the college, visitors, and college boys fell into line, and as they moved toward the opera house, where the exercises were to be held, they presented a very imposing sight, or at least so thought Ward and Jack, who with their classmates brought up the rear of the procession.

The salutatory was delivered in Latin, for old Tegrus was

slow to change from the customs and traditions of the fathers, and as the opening oration had, from the time when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, been given in the Roman tongue, no one was so sacrilegious as to suggest even the slightest change. Perhaps in the buzz of the audience it would have mattered little in what language it had been given, for it would hardly have been listened to, much less heard.

Other orations followed, all these in English, however, and at last came the valedictory and the award of degrees. The senior class filed in upon the great platform, the president of the college addressed them, and then turning to the trustees began to speak in Latin.

The president of the Board was a hard-headed, successful business man, who did not understand one word of the president's address, but he looked wise and remained silent, both of which often go almost as far in impressing the world as does the genuine knowledge of what is going on about us.

The address was concluded, the formalities were gone through with, and then the exercises of the morning were finished, and another class, full of hope and zeal, had gone forth from the halls of old Tegrus to take their places among the struggling masses of men, and be known as alumni of the famous college. To the alumni dinner which followed, Ward and Jack were not admitted, for the under classmen were barred. The songs and laughter which came from the great banquet room, for the feast was held in the college gymnasium, clearly revealed that the affair was not a sad one, at all events, and the new sophomores, with curiosity aroused but unsatisfied, were compelled to possess their souls in patience with the thought that soon they too would be alumni, and permitted to have a share in the festivities which crowned the close of each year.

Of the class reunions and banquets, of the continued interest and bustle, our boys were aware, but the indirect

impression was all that it was their privilege as freshman to have.

"It's been a great time," said Jack that afternoon, when he and Ward were once more together in their room. "I wonder if we'll have as big a one when it comes to be our turn to dress up in those gowns and caps?"

"I hope so. It's a sight to stir one's blood to see what goes on here in commencement week. I'm glad I stayed over, for you know I thought of going home."

"Of course you're glad. Tell you what, Ward, old Tegrus is the college."

"Then you're not sorry you came here, to a small college?" inquired Ward, with a quizzical expression upon his face.

"Sorry? I rather guess not. Crintop and the rest of them may count their students if they want to, we'll weigh ours. No sir! I'm a Tegrus man now all the way and every day."

"Fresh *man*?"

"Not much. I'm a full-fledged sophomore now. No one will ever yell 'freshman' at me again. And if I don't pay off some of my old scores it will be because my name isn't Jack Hobart. Hello, Anceps!" he suddenly added, as he saw Russell standing before the open door. "Come in! come in!"

Russell entered and seated himself in the chair which Jack indicated by a kick. He was evidently not at his ease, but after a brief hesitation he said, "When do you fellows leave?"

"We're going to-morrow morning," said Jack. "When do you go?"

"I don't just know. I may wait over a day or two, and then I may not. You see I'm not just decided yet about what I shall do next year."

"Next year? Did you get conditioned? Didn't you pass?" inquired Jack.

"Yes, I got conditioned and I didn't pass," replied Russell gloomily. "But that isn't the worst of it."

"What's worse?"

"I owe money all over town. I don't think the people here ought to 'trust' the college boys. They might know it would get us into trouble."

"I don't know that it's all their fault," said Ward.

"No, you blame me. You're like every one else," said Russell bitterly.

"I'm not one to throw stones," responded Ward quickly.

"I know what your trouble is, Russell. I've been right there myself."

"What? You? I never would have thought that of you, Hill."

"Well, it was before I came to college. I don't like to talk about it, and shouldn't, if it hadn't come up here now. But you don't have to give up, Russell."

"What can I do?"

"Do?" interrupted Jack. "Do? Go home and tell your father all about it. Tell him like a man and don't try to crawl now."

"You don't know my father," said Russell despondently.

"I'd never dare to tell him. But he'll find it out. I know he will, and what will become of me I don't know."

Russell's depression was so marked that both of the boys were bound to sympathize with him, but Jack, whose relations with his own father were so cordial and free, could not understand this reluctance.

At last he said: "Well, Russell, if I were in your place, I'd go straight to my father and make a clean breast of the whole thing. It's either that or worse; and it's going to come anyway."

"I suppose so," said Russell as he arose and departed from the room.

Both Ward and Jack were too eager to depart now to dwell long upon even such trouble as that of Russell's.

Soon after their trunks had gone they too went down to the station and joined the crowd waiting there for the coming trains. Songs, class cries, and cheers were mingled with the laughter that could be heard on every side. Old rivalries, even those of the under classmen, were for the time being ignored, and the sight and presence of the crowd of eager, happy-hearted young men was one to stir the hearts of all who beheld them. The train which Jack and Ward were to take came in before the other, and as they clambered on board and then stood waiting upon the platform, as the cars moved out from the station, they were followed by the cheers of their fellow-students, and as long as the group could be seen, hats were waved in the air and the shouts were faintly heard.

"We've lived through freshman year," said Jack, as they entered the car and secured a seat together.

"Yes, we've lived through freshman year," responded Ward, "and if I'm not mistaken, it will be the key to the whole course."

Ward Hill spoke more truly than he knew, for the year did prove to be a key to the course. In sophomore year the experiences were simply reversed, and instead of being the victims of the class above them they were themselves the aggressors; but the deeds, nevertheless, were almost exactly like those of the preceding year.

To their delight their friend Henry returned with them in the fall, and though sadly handicapped, was able to keep up with the class. All three of the boys occupied the suite of rooms in Hall, and their genuine friendship became constantly stronger.

Russell too returned, and although he explained to the boys that he had "made it up with his father," the fact seemed to do him little good, for his lack of decision and inherent weakness soon dragged him down once more, and before the end of the sophomore year he was dismissed from the college in disgrace.

In junior year our boys again shared in the feelings of the entering class, being their natural allies, and many were the exciting experiences as they "rushed" men for the great Delta Beta fraternity, or strove to aid the freshmen to uphold a proper class spirit.

Soon they were grave and dignified seniors, but the freshman year still proved to be the key to it all, only now they were the ones to give advice instead of to receive it, and Jack more than once declared that he knew it was more blessed to give than to receive.

The steady work in and for the classroom knew but little variation, though there were the nine, and the eleven, and the fraternity, and other necessary adjuncts, to be looked to. The novelty was all gone now, and the more serious purposes of life had come. The childish things were put away; somewhat sadly, perhaps, but still placed behind them, and at last came the great day when our boys joined the procession which for many years had annually been formed upon the college campus, and in cap and gown marched down to the opera house for the commencement exercises, this time not as spectators, but as participants.

Still it was but a repetition of the freshman year, for the exercises were markedly like those which they had then witnessed for the first time.

The rivalries of the entering year had been continued, and still held, Pond graduating at the head of the class and Ward Hill standing second, while Jack and Henry were more than content to be numbered in the "first half."

There was a wonderful pathos as well as gladness about those closing days. "The last time" were words they frequently heard and more frequently thought of. Even the members of the faculty appeared to feel regret that the marvelous class was to go. Together our boys paid their last visit to the athletic field, to each of the college buildings, to the society house, and also made their final calls upon their friends in town.

Then on the morning following the commencement exercises, arm in arm they walked down the college path beneath the interlacing elms, and the glory of life, softened like the sunlight which penetrated between the leaves of the grand old trees, seemed to lie upon the pathway before them. Without a word they went out through the college gate, and then, moved as by a common impulse, turned and gazed back upon the old college.

The venerable buildings were as they had been when four years before our friends had first looked upon them. The elms swayed gracefully under the morning breeze, the many-windowed structures seemed almost to look out at them with human eyes. The few students who still remained could be seen moving about the campus. All things were the same, and yet how changed.

"We're *alumni* now," said Jack softly. "We're 'old grads.'"

And without another word the three friends, still arm in arm, turned once more and together started on the pathway which was to lead them into life.

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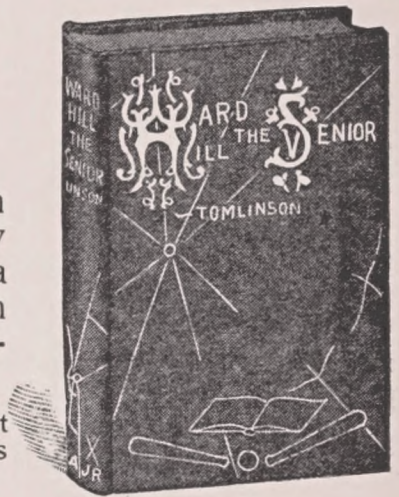
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